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THE DUBLIN MAGAZINE

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APRIL—JUNE, 1927.

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Song for the Wild Geese

18th Century.

BY MICHAEL SCOT.

My love goes over the sea,
My dark young love.
Bud of the thorn is he
(White, on the wine of the sea,
The Wild Geese move).

The sweet far land of France
Is a tale untold ;
The blossomy Queen of France
Has shoes of gold ;
Light is her foot in the dance.
(But the night wind blowing to France
Is wet and cold).

The lilies of France are white
And the wine is red,
And the little white son of the king
Has a golden bed.
(O bright in the mist, to-night,
Glimmers the snowy flight
Of the Wild Geese overhead !).

The thoughts of my heart break free
Like sparks from a broken turf,
Burning and scattering
Over the pitiless sea.
(O wild and dark is the sea !
And the beat of a wounded wing
Sounds in the surf),

Two Translations after the French of François Villon

BY MICHAEL SCOT.

Belle Leçon de Villon aux Enfans Perduz.

Fair boys, mind and not let ye throw
The blossom of your youth away
In Rueil or in Montpipeau.
O students linked and laughing gay,
Mind yourselves passing down that way!
There Colin de Cayeux drew breath
After long banishment, one day,
And, for diversion, got his death.

Your body and your soul may be
You're chancing like two yellow pins.
You can't re-toss the halfpenny,
Though you sup sorrow for your sins.
It isn't that the winner wins
Queen Dido of Carthage itself:
The man has little sense that spins
His life for bits of painted delph.

Your gold, my lads, will scatter fast:
'Tis true, by the Most Holy Rood,
That mountain dew may never last
By winter fire, in summer wood!
Ah, ill gain never brought much good.
And when it's gone—what have ye then?
Sure wine itself—ay, maybe food,
Life will begrudge to shuler-men.

Lay: Ou plustost Rondeau.

Death, death, I cry against thy sway;
Black death who stole my love from me,
Left me alone—the blighted tree,
Poor match am I for thee this day.

And she—the tender blossom spray—
What harm at all to you was she,
Death?

Two, we, with but one heart to slay
Slain—ah, sweet love!—it lies, and see
How I live on all lifelessly:
So figures live, made out of clay,
Death.

A Prayer

Lord of sky and open spaces,
Friendly fields and kindly faces,
Send thy pity, lend thy grace
To folk in this suburban place:
And let some poet through the year,
Set a wild thought wandering here.

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN.

The Viking

(A skeleton was recently found near the Donegal coast. A sword lay beside it, and since this was of Danish pattern it was conjectured that possibly it had been that of a Danish invader, although there is no other evidence, to my knowledge, that the Vikings reached the N.W. coast.)

You were not buried. On some winter night
Your terrible comrades left your corpse concealed,
Your fair hair sodden with blood, your strong face white,
Under an Irish moon. There on the field
They left you naked as a stick new-peeled,
And took their torch-lit flight.

What brought you, Viking, to the Irish shore?
Was it in lust of gold that you set out
To sack some monastery of its little store
Of plate and crucifix? To hear the shout
Of craven Christian monks, and have a bout
With Christ, upheld by Thor?

I think you loved not gold, but loved the glitter,
The changing glitter of some Sigrid's hair,
And her smile held the power to embitter
A fireside life, and sent you forth to fare
But for the venture; than a dull life there,
Deeming a brave death fitter.

You were a Captain's son; you heard his tale
Of thunderous ventures over leaping seas,
You took his sword, you buckled on his mail,
And out of some lone river with the breeze,
On a long ship with bearded companies
Of Vikings, you set sail.

Your wounds were breast-wounds, and your father's hilt
Fast in your hand was clutched when you were dead ;
No coward's blood on Irish soil you spilt ;
You lunged, you failed, you fell. Your fellows said,
" This was a noble warrior . . . he has bled
Sweet blood in sweeter tilt."

That night of battle an alarm was born,
And shouts were in the field. The Viking host
Under a moon turned bloody, took their torn
Comrades and flags aboard. Along the coast
Their lights were hovering as though many a ghost
Turned back to sea at morn.

But first in love they stripped you of your arms,
Left you your sword to clutch, and hid you well ;
You never knew defeat, nor heard alarms
To wreck your tranquil dreams ; laughing, you fell ;
Too late that grim retreat to break the spell
Cast by your Sigrid's charms.

You found a cause worth serving, Viking lad,
You never doubted in the sorest stress
That it was worth the struggle, and the sad
Ache of endeavour, which you counted less
Than momentary hunger. Your success
Another Iliad.

Your life was beautiful—lived in a beautiful age
Of sunrise anger and of sunset kiss ;
Nurtured in war, you took your heritage,
And found your life too lovely to dismiss
With a worn tale of fundamentals amiss
And wars too dire to wage.

You found the beauty of the world in death,
Dying the servant of a trusted cause ;
Life gave you all her gifts to draw like breath,
And faith denied you sorrow of a pause
Before the courts of life. Like God's applause,
Your death-laugh echoeth.

Still there is beauty in the world, and yet
Not found as yours was found, in every fire ;
We waver to and fro, we are beset
With this consideration, that desire ;
Our songs are lost upon a broken lyre,
We have learned to forget.

And though the sickly steams of our resolve
Creep upward still, they are so blown about
By every breeze, they eddy and revolve
Among such whisperings of shameful doubt,
They never reach the sky, but like a shout
Across a bay, dissolve.

Laugh, Viking, in Valhalla ! Thunders there
A voice more awful than the shouting sea,
Calling you out on ventures new to fare ;
While on your one dark battle-field are we,
Still wondering at your faith's simplicity,
Lacking the heart to care.

RUPERT CROFT-COOKE.

The Pipe in the Fields

A Play in One Act.

By T. C. MURRAY.

Characters :

MARTIN KEVILLE.

NORA *His wife.*

PETER *His son.*

FATHER MOORE.

MRS. CAROLAN *A neighbour.*

A dancer and musicians.

Scene :—The living room of a farmhouse.

To T.H.,

THE LITTLE BOY WHO BEGGED
HIS UNCLE TO WRITE A PLAY
“WITH A VERY HAPPY ENDING.”

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The scene is the living room in the farmhouse of the Kevilles. To the right is a deep, old-fashioned fireplace. At the back is a window. There is a door leading directly to the farmyard and fields. Another door leads to an ante-room. A little shelf of books hangs at the back between the window and the door. The furniture is of the kind usually seen in most Irish farmhouses.

As the curtain rises Mrs. Keville is seen knitting in the glow of the turf-fire. The moonlight is gradually rising and flooding the room like a tide. Peter Keville, her son, is at the window, his arms leaned on the sill, deep in thought. He is gazing into the night. His figure is a warm shadow set against the luminous space without. His mother looks at him from time to time. There is a hint of anxiety in her questioning silence.

MRS. KEVILLE : Peter ? (*He does not hear her*).

MRS. KEVILLE : Peter, boy ? (*He turns slightly as if waking from a dream*).

MRS. KEVILLE : What's out there ? Are you dreaming or what ?

PETER : Dreaming ? I was only watching the moon breaking from a cloud.

MRS. KEVILLE (*vaguely*) : The—the moon, boy ?

PETER : Yes. The cloud's a drift o' bright foam. See, mother.

MRS. KEVILLE (*looking for a moment and then turning away*) :
There's no wonder in that surely except to a little child.

PETER : And isn't it good sometimes to be as a little child ?

MRS. KEVILLE : I don't know. Children have little sense. The world would trample us, Peter, and we to have only a child's understanding.

PETER (*a little wistfully*) : I—I wish you could sometimes see things with my eyes ?

MRS. KEVILLE : That's foolish. Who could see anything with another's eyes ?

PETER : Look, mother—just one moment ?

MRS. KEVILLE : What is it ?

PETER : Only the quiet of everything out there You can hear the cows chewing the cud . . . an' the crush of their hooves on the grass. Look, I must be going now.

MRS. KEVILLE : But the supper's nearly ready ? The kettle's singing, boy.

PETER : There's finer music outside.

MRS. KEVILLE : What music ? I'm not deaf, and I hear nothing.
Not even a blade o' grass stirring.

PETER : It's in the woods—in the blue air—in the moonlight. I have to go.

MRS. KEVILLE : Not now, Peter ! Wait ? Wait ?

PETER : I can't.

MRS. KEVILLE : Look at the heavy dew that's falling, and you were drenched to the skin last night. 'Twill be bitter cold too. Don't you see the sharp edge on the moon—an' there's the pinched cry of a little bird ?

PETER : They're warm dews—warm an' kind. You can smell the earth and the grasses. The air is sweet as a child's breathing. Staying here would be a sin.

MRS. KEVILLE : Don't be foolish, Peter, boy. Look, for three nights running you've tasted nothing. And 'twasn't far from daybreak when you came in last night.

PETER : I had a bowl o' milk and a crust before going to my bed.

MRS. KEVILLE : What kind o' food is that for a strong man ?

PETER : A feast, and one needing no more.

MRS. KEVILLE : A feast for a starving child maybe. You'll be staying at home to-night, Peter ?

PETER (*moving towards the open door*) : I can't, and everything out there calling to me.

MRS. KEVILLE : Look, Peter. Here is white bread—and a bit o' the roasted kid since the dinner—and a taste o' goat's milk for the tea.

PETER : I'll come back in a short space to please you. I will, indeed. 'Tis how there's a new tune rising in my mind . . . I couldn't stay and have it perish.

MRS. KEVILLE : What's gone wrong with you, Peter ?

PETER : Wrong ? Why so ?

MRS. KEVILLE : I'm—I'm troubled about you. I can't sleep o' nights thinking. Your father, too.

PETER : Why should ye trouble ? I—I don't understand.

MRS. KEVILLE : You're not the same. You've never known quiet since you got that fife from the stranger. It's brought you bad luck. There's enchantment on it—drawing you in the dead o' night into the fields an' the woods. What's your life but troubled dreams since that hour ?

PETER : Life is life only since then.

MRS. KEVILLE : What's that ?

PETER : My eyes were dark. My ears stopped. I'm like one seeing the sun for the first time.

MRS. KEVILLE : What kind of gibberish is that, Peter ? For God's sake, talk sense. Why can't you be as you were always—minding only the day's work an' caring for nothing else ?

PETER : You wouldn't have me like that again—a blind worm rooting in the clay—an' the miracle that's happened to me ?

MRS. KEVILLE : The—the miracle ?

PETER : When I put the fife to my lips and I alone out there in the fields music comes to me lovely an' shining—and voices in the wind—and sometimes I see, moving in a dance——

MRS. KEVILLE : Mother o' God, hush, boy. There's no such things. It's all wild fancy—rambling talk ——

PETER : I see them more clear than you standing there.

MRS. KEVILLE : No, no, Peter. No one living ever saw such things. Your mind is wrecked—'tis all on fire. That fife—'tis cursed. For God's sake never put it to your lips again ? Throw it into the sea or the fire. Bury it out o' sight—out o' mind.

PETER (*regarding the instrument tenderly*) : Out o' sight—out o' mind—my fife ?—and it bringing to my soul such joy—joy foaming up like the songs o' the woods at sunrise. (*He moves past her to the open door*).

MRS. KEVILLE : Stop, Peter, son ! For pity sake ! (*He is gone*). Mother o' God, pity us. Our one boy. His mind is breaking, and we'll be lost for ever.

(*She sits by the fire, a figure of troubled quiet. Rising, she goes to light the lamp. As she puts the match to the wick Mrs. Carolan comes in. Mrs. Keville endeavours to suppress all traces of her emotion*).

MRS. CAROLAN (*at the open door*) : God be your life.

MRS. KEVILLE : The same to you, Oona (*with assumed heartiness*). And how's your share o' the world ?

MRS. CAROLAN : Good, thanks be to God. Good. You're all well yourself ?

MRS. KEVILLE : O, so long as we have the health we shouldn't grumble. (*Handing her a chair*) Be taking your ease.

MRS. CAROLAN : 'Tis hardly worth while. But still the night is young. (*She sits down*).

MRS. KEVILLE : Anything strange these times, Oona ?

MRS. CAROLAN : Only that there's news east at Curley McKenna's—a son at last.

MRS. KEVILLE : A son ? Well ! Well ! That's wonderful, coming after such a flock of girls. They must be wild with joy ?

MRS. CAROLAN : Wild is no name for it. I met Curley himself and, honest to God, you'd think that a little bit of a boy was one o' the seven wonders o' the world. Shaking hands with this one an' that, and pouring out whiskey as if 'twas water itself.

MRS. KEVILLE : Wisha, the poor man, who'd blame him ? Girls are good ; but, the Lord save us, seven o' them ! Heaven send the little boy will be a blessing to them. A body never knows.

MRS. CAROLAN : Wisha, amen to that. (*Suddenly*) O now I knew there was something I wanted to ask you.

MRS. KEVILLE : Well, then.

MRS. CAROLAN (*eagerly*) : Tell me, did you hear last night the strange music they're all talking about everywhere ?

MRS. KEVILLE : Music is it ? How would I hear it ?

MRS. CAROLAN : It came from the edge o' the little pine wood east o' the house.

MRS. KEVILLE : I always sleep heavy in the first hours of the night.

MRS. CAROLAN : Faith, you couldn't be sleeping deeper than myself, Nora. I did my washing yesterday, and I was that tired, with every bone in my body aching, that I stumbled into bed half in a drowse.

MRS. KEVILLE : So you would. And what was it shook the sleep off you now ?

MRS. CAROLAN : Hugh himself. I opened my eyes, tired as I was, and as God lives, Nora, I thought at first 'twas dreaming I was.

MRS. KEVILLE : Well, surely.

MRS. CAROLAN : The room was bright as day for the moon was at the full, and there was himself after leaving his bed—with respect to you—and he listening breathless by the open window.

MRS. KEVILLE : Glory ! An' did—did he see anyone at all ?

MRS. CAROLAN : Wait'll I tell you. " Hugh ! " said I, half frightened like. " Hugh ! " " Listen—listen, for God's sake, Oona," says he—" the music." I held my breath, an' then I heard a fife playing somewhere. It seemed to come from the little wood beyond.

MRS. KEVILLE : You weren't dreaming ?

MRS. CAROLAN : No more than yourself this minute. Strange music it was—coming seemingly out of another world.

MRS. KEVILLE : Well ! Well !

MRS. CAROLAN : One time, Nora, 'twas like the cry of a lost soul. It went through you like a pain. And then quiet little sleepy tunes like you'd be making for a little child in the cradle—and then queer, wild, lovely music like the rain dancing on the grass of an April day. I didn't believe in spirits or enchantment till that hour. The clock struck two, an' then there was only the silence of the fields.

MRS. KEVILLE : Well, that's a strange story surely. And you—you saw no one ?

MRS. CAROLAN : No—the sight is none too good with me at night. But Hugh swears he saw a shadow—a young man or an old man—he couldn't tell—and it moving across the fields in this direction. God keep you from trouble an' danger, Nora.

MRS. KEVILLE : Wisha, amen.

MRS. CAROLAN : Strange now you or Martin not to hear it ?

MRS. KEVILLE : 'Tis only the trump o' the Archangel would wake Martin from his sleep. He hasn't the tough strength of your man, Oona, and he do be dead tired, God help him.

MRS. CAROLAN : I wouldn't wonder. But Peter, now ? Hugh an' myself saw a light in his little window in the gable. Likely the music woke him too ?

MRS. KEVILLE : Faith, if it did, he kept it to himself. He might be thinking we'd be afraid. He's that gentle he wouldn't have anything upset our mind. Anyway he's little given to talk unless you ask him.

MRS. CAROLAN : 'Tis a terrible mystery. I hope there's no evil thing abroad, God save us.

MRS. KEVILLE : There could be no bad thing in music.

MRS. CAROLAN : You'd never know, Nora. One to believe the old stories, there's nothing the Devil can't do to fool even the wise.

MRS. KEVILLE (*suddenly*) : Look, now, it's just come into my mind. There was races east at Carricknacrusa yesterday. Mightn't it be one o' them strollers making his way home ? The day and the nights do be one to their kind.

MRS. CAROLAN : Queer now, that's a thought never struck me. It might well happen that way.

MRS. KEVILLE : Yeh, how else ?

MRS. CAROLAN : Still now, Nora, I don't know. What common stroller at the races ever made music like that ? I must ask Hugh. He's for ever reading the papers and giving out the newses of the world.

MRS. KEVILLE : Hugh's a well learned man.

MRS. CAROLAN : He's all that, Nora—though 't isn't for myself to say it. Great rocks o' words as long as to-day an' to-morrow he can read without ever stumbling.

MRS. KEVILLE : I know. Sure 'tis said by many that he upset the priest himself in argument.

MRS. CAROLAN : And it's God's truth. 'Twas something about the old Land Act. But indeed, between ourselves, 'tis too much talk he have at times, Nora. My head do be bothered with the dint of trying to understand him.

MRS. KEVILLE : Martin, now, is different—no way at all given to argument.

MRS. CAROLAN : And that's the best way in the end. It's a fright your man to be in love with his own talk. But the Lord gave us our men, Nora, as He made them, and we must be content.

MRS. KEVILLE : O, we can't complain. Sure 'tis many that never know peace for want of a living man.

MRS. CAROLAN : And how many that never knows peace because o' them ?

MRS. KEVILLE : 'Tis a queer mix-up, Oona.

MRS. CAROLAN : Aye, 'tis like a ravel o' thread—all a hopeless tangle. (*Rising*) But what's this brought me ? The music put my thoughts astray. O, yes—Minnie Clancy that's leaving us. *Notions*, if you please. Any chance now you'd hear of a girl out o' service ?

MRS. KEVILLE : Well now, as it happens, the Widow Hanly's daughter is at home.

MRS. CAROLAN : I know her—Anastatia. A quiet, sensible girl—not like that gadabout, Minnie Clancy. Well now, wasn't it the luck o' the world I to ask you ? Ah, here's the man o' the house. I have to be going. Hugh will be giving out I to be so long. Good night, Martin.

(Martin is a gentle old man, simple and kindly in his thought and ways).

MARTIN : Good night, Oona.

MRS. CAROLAN (*on the doorstep*) : Praise God, but isn't it the wonderful night. Such stars ! Lovely. (*Going*) Well, good luck to ye.

MARTIN, MRS. KEVILLE : You too, Oona.

MRS. KEVILLE (*eagerly*) : Well, you saw the priest ?

MARTIN : He was away on a sick-call the other side o' the glen.

MRS. KEVILLE : O dear, dear.

MARTIN : Don't worry, Nora. 'Twill be all right. Father Moore was never one to delay and people needing him.

MRS. KEVILLE : You left word ?

MARTIN : I did so. "The minute he comes I'll give the priest your message," says the housekeeper. A kind, civil-spoken woman, Nora.

MRS. KEVILLE : You didn't give her any hint of our trouble, Martin ? 'Twould be terrible it to go abroad.

MARTIN : All I said was that we'd like to see the priest in a hurry. What way was he since ?

MRS. KEVILLE : Queer then. Queer, God help him.

MARTIN : How so ?

MRS. KEVILLE : Standing there by himself at the open window. Staring at common things as if they were miracles. Lost in a trance-like.

MARTIN : And no word at all out of him ?

MRS. KEVILLE : Never a word till I called him two or three times. And then such strange talk as no one ever heard, God save us.

MARTIN : That's bad following last night.

MRS. KEVILLE : An' worse, Martin, out he goes with the fife again into the fields and his supper nearly ready. O, Martin, what's to come ?

MARTIN : God is good, Nora. Take heart, and don't be looking at the black side o' things.

MRS. KEVILLE : Where's any bright side, Martin ?

MARTIN : Isn't there the priest ? He's a holy man, and full o' pity for all that do be in trouble. He'll put his hand on him, praying to the Almighty, and his mind will be cleared.

MRS. KEVILLE : God send it. If we could only keep it from the neighbours. Oona Carolan heard the music last night, and I was hard set trying to hide my thought and she making such wonder about it.

MARTIN : She—she hadn't any suspicion—like ?

MRS. KEVILLE : No, though 'twas puzzling her mind ourselves or Peter not to hear it. She saw the patch o' light in his window. God forgive me all the lies I told—but it wasn't with my will.

MARTIN : Who'd blame you twisting things a little ? There isn't a living mother but would do the same.

MRS. KEVILLE (*suddenly*) : Whisht ! there's someone coming. Don't let them see the way we are.

MARTIN (*listening*) : 'Tis the priest, Nora. I know his step.

MRS. KEVILLE : Thank God for that. 'Twill be a comfort to tell him, he's so understanding.

(*Father Moore comes in. An old white-haired kindly man*).

MARTIN : Welcome, Father.

FATHER MOORE : Thanks, Martin. Thanks.

MRS. KEVILLE : 'Twas good of you to come and you tired, I'm sure, after that long journey east the glen.

FATHER MOORE : I'd be glad to come here any hour, day or night,
Mrs. Keville.

MRS. KEVILLE : God bless you, Father. Be resting yourself.
(*Mrs. Keville carefully latches the door*).

FATHER MOORE (*sitting down*) : I hope, Martin, there's nothing
wrong ?

MARTIN : Herself will tell you best maybe how it is with us.

MRS. KEVILLE (*sitting down*) : 'Tis how we're greatly troubled
about Peter, Father Moore.

FATHER MOORE : Peter ?

MRS. KEVILLE : Yes, Father.

FATHER MOORE : He's not ill, surely ?

MRS. KEVILLE : I'm afraid he is, Father—in his mind like.

FATHER MOORE : What's that ? *His mind* ? Peter ?

MARTIN : We don't know rightly, Father Moore, but we're afraid
there's something astray.

FATHER MOORE : Nonsense, Martin. A quiet working lad like
that.

MRS. KEVILLE : You'll soon see yourself, Father Moore.

FATHER MOORE : There's some mistake. Knowing Peter as I do,
I can't conceive such a thing happening. Tell me exactly,
Mrs. Keville.

MRS. KEVILLE : 'Twas like this, Father. A while ago a tramp
was going the way.

MARTIN : Just five weeks to-night, Father Moore.

MRS. KEVILLE : We were having a meal here the three of us, nice
an' quiet, when he stood in the door. He was tired and out o'
breath, and the dust o' the roads thick upon him.

MARTIN : A gentle-spoken old man and very pale.

MRS. KEVILLE : Martin asked him in, and we gave him a bit to
eat. When he was done he sat there at the fire, and taking
out his fife he asked would he play for us.

FATHER MOORE : Well ?

MRS. KEVILLE : We said not to mind—Martin and myself—for there
was a good share o' work waiting for us—but Peter made us
hush, and the stranger put the fife to his lips. Listening to

him, Father, Peter was like one enchanted. He wouldn't be satisfied, but wanting more an' more like a child.

MARTIN : I think, Father, the music set his heart burning.

FATHER MOORE : Yes, what happened ?

MRS. KEVILLE : " I'll buy that fife o' you, 'stranger," says he. " How much would you give ? " says the stranger. " All I have," says he ; and before we could say even a word there was he offering him a fistful o' silver.

FATHER MOORE : The stranger took it ?

MRS. KEVILLE : " I'm in sore need," says he—I remember the words—" and only for that I wouldn't give it for as full a measure o' gold as you're offering silver." " My soul has gone into that instrument boy," says he, " but the hunger has beaten me dead, and you can have it."

FATHER MOORE : Well ?

MRS. KEVILLE : " I'll be walking a bit o' the road with you now," says Peter, and out they went together.

MARTIN : From that hour he's not himself, Father.

FATHER MOORE : In what way, Martin ?

MARTIN : Living in some world of his own. Work, food, drink—they're nothing to him.

MRS. KEVILLE : For two nights running now he's been out in the fields an' the woods making music on the fife till dawn.

FATHER MOORE : Who taught him the instrument, Mrs. Keville ? How did he learn ?

MRS. KEVILLE : Tunes come to him, he says, by a miracle. And while the tune lasts he sees things.

MARTIN : Visions, Father. Visions-like.

MRS. KEVILLE : Isn't it clear that his mind's astray, Father ?

FATHER MOORE : I'll not say that till I speak with him. Peter, I think, was no common boy. He had something—instincts—unknown to other lads. I felt that all those years he used to serve my Mass.

MARTIN : How was that, Father ? You surprise me !

FATHER MOORE : I hardly know—in little things. He could slip a few flowers into a vase, for instance, in a way a nun might envy.

MRS. KEVILLE : Glory !

FATHER MOORE : At Christmas he'd give little touches to the Crib that often made me look at him dumb with surprise.

MARTIN : And now that you mention it, Father, I remember many a strange thing he would be doing. Stopping dead one time in the middle of the fresh furrow to listen to a bit of a lark singing—or watching the first green branches shaking in the wind——

MRS. KEVILLE : And don't you remember him stretched on his back for hours in the ferns looking into the sky as if it was an enchanted book. There, Father—the fife—do you hear ?

(The mellow note of a flute in the fields comes through the open window. The mood is tender, suggesting with delicate charm the pensive beauty of the night. They listen, held by its magic).

MRS. KEVILLE : There, Father, isn't that a queer thing. *(He is silent).*

MARTIN : Isn't it fine music though, and no master ever to learn him ?

FATHER MOORE : I have little musical sense, Martin, but it sounds good to the ear.

MRS. KEVILLE : You must take the fife from him, Father. He's lost his head through that, as you'll see.

MARTIN : I thought to fling it into a bog-hole myself one day, but I was afraid of what might happen.

MRS. KEVILLE : What would happen ? He'd soon drift back into the old way of life again.

FATHER MOORE *(gravely)* : I'm not so sure, Mrs. Keville. This is a matter for men who have spent their lives studying such things—not for us. 'Tis easy to blunder.

MRS. KEVILLE : To pick the thorn that makes the wound or the speck o' dust tormenting your eye can be no blunder surely.

FATHER MOORE : That's true, of course—but it's not the same.

MRS. KEVILLE : How so ?

FATHER MOORE : Human minds aren't human bodies, Mrs. Keville—they're finer woven. Very dull men can learn everything of the body in a few years : with the mind it's

different—the wisest know very little—they're merely groping. I must see and talk with Peter before giving any opinion. This sudden passion for music may mean nothing.

MARTIN : Yourself should know, Father.

FATHER MOORE : O don't think that—I'm only a very ignorant man in these things, Martin. It's just possible that he had this gift always—that it was part of his nature.

MRS. KEVILLE : How could that be, Father ? He never touched a fiddle or fife in all his years.

MARTIN : But he was for ever singing bits o' songs and old ballads about the house, Nora ?

MRS. KEVILLE : And what boy in his idle moments doesn't do the same ? Have some sense, Martin. And indeed 'tis not so much the music as the wild imagining it rouses in him.

FATHER MOORE : The seed must have been there, Mrs. Keville, unknown to himself. Things long hidden in the mind as well as in the earth sometimes break suddenly into flower.

MARTIN : I've seen the like myself many times in the fields.

MRS. KEVILLE : But why should that set his mind astray ?

FATHER MOORE : Because, Mrs. Keville, though nothing is more natural than birth, it is, for all its joy, a disturbance and a pain—as you know yourself. I warrant this excitement will pass in a little time.

MARTIN : You think that, Father ?

FATHER MOORE : I know it, Martin.

MRS. KEVILLE : One thing, Father Moore ; there was never a strain in one side or the other as far back as we can remember—but whisht ! I hear him coming now. Don't pretend, Father, we sent for you.

FATHER MOORE : Yes, I understand.

MARTIN : I'll let on you've come looking for help to make the hayrick—or one thing or another.

MRS. KEVILLE : Whisht !

(Peter comes in. His eyes reveal the glow of a mind momentarily lifted out of its common plane).

MRS. KEVILLE *(pleasantly)* : For once you've kept your word, Peter. Here's the priest before you.

FATHER MOORE (*cordially*) : Ah, good night, Peter.

PETER : Good night, Father.

MARTIN : Father Moore's thinking of selling that little Kerry cow of his, and I've been telling him that we could drive her, the two of us, with our own heifers to the next fair.

PETER : Of course, Father Moore, and welcome.

FATHER MOORE : Thanks, boy. Thanks. What's this you have, Peter—a fife ?

PETER : Yes, Father.

FATHER MOORE : Let me see it.

(*Peter hands it to him. Father Moore carefully examines the instrument. They all instinctively gather round.*)

FATHER MOORE : Bless my soul, boy, a lovely bit of craftsmanship ! No common hand fashioned this. I didn't know till now that you were a musician. Who taught you so well ?

PETER (*simply*) : Myself, Father.

FATHER MOORE : Yourself ?

PETER : The knowledge came to me in a flash. I've been—inspired like—or something.

FATHER MOORE : That's a word we shouldn't use lightly, boy. Inspiration is for men like St. Luke and St. John—not for you and me.

PETER : I don't know, Father. I'm sorry . . . Things queer and strange have happened.

MRS. KEVILLE (*quietly*) : You hear, Father ?

FATHER MOORE : Hush ! What's happened, Peter ?

PETER : I couldn't explain . . . I—I hardly know myself.

MARTIN : Remember, boy, 'tis to the priest you're talking.

FATHER MOORE : Hush, Martin.

PETER (*to Martin*) : Excuse me, Father. I only said what's true. (*He moves away.*)

FATHER MOORE (*to Martin and Mrs. Keville, very quietly*) : Go away for a little time. We're better alone, the two of us.

MARTIN : Of course, Father. Of course. I know. Come, Nora. (*They go away quietly.*)

FATHER MOORE (*confidentially*) : Now, Peter ?

PETER (*smiling*): Those two think I'm—I'm queer—half out o' my wits. I hope you don't think so, Father?

FATHER MOORE: O, no. Why should I?

PETER: You see I'm—I'm a little changed. I'm different.

FATHER MOORE: Different? How, boy?

PETER: You'd hardly understand, Father.

FATHER MOORE: I've been a long time in the world, you know, Peter. One gathers some wisdom in seventy years.

PETER: I know—I'm sorry—but you'd say like them I was romancing—or worse. You'd laugh at me—not knowing.

FATHER MOORE: Believe me, no. Trust me. Come, Peter, my son, in confidence.

PETER (*after a moment's hesitation*): Well, then 'twas like this, Father. Ever an' always from the time I was any age I felt there was something—I don't know what—a dark cloud-like—in my mind. When I breathed into that fife and the lovely notes came out, I felt the shadow lifting, and a light—like a clean wind—rushing into my soul. I see things and I playing out there in the fields that no eyes here ever saw. . . . Give it to me, Father.

FATHER MOORE: My dear boy, that's only wild imagining—unreal as dreams. Your mind is a little fevered—that's all. You must be strong, Peter, *strong*—and fight against this delusion. Yielding to it will only wreck your mind. I'm all for your good, believe me.

PETER: That's what mother says. And father. They're blind.

FATHER MOORE: And I?

PETER: I'm sorry, but your eyes, they're

FATHER MOORE: Well? Say it.

PETER: They're something dark too, Father?

FATHER MOORE: No, Peter—not in this matter. They're clear as day.

PETER: They see only a little distance. Mine see farther. . . . I saw my own soul once. You wouldn't believe that? Don't laugh, Father. Out of a tune I saw it.

FATHER MOORE: Your *soul*? Peter!

PETER : Out of a tune I saw it. A naked tree it was—bare an' dry as a bone against the sky. A little wind came—a kind wind—and in a breath it put out leaves—leaves that fluttered an' danced like butterflies in the sun. That's how I saw it—out of a tune. I'd swear it ! (*The priest looks into his glowing eyes with pity*). Give me the fife. I'll play for you. You'll see things too. You *must* see them, Father. I feel a lovely tune waking in my mind. Listen, before it passes from me.

(He takes the flute and begins to play a rhapsody, an evocation of the spirit of Spring. A faint shadowy light like the green radiance of a wood pervades the room. A spirit dimly revealed floats in, moving at first in a slow dance, but gradually rising to a swifter, wilder movement. The sound of muted strings mingling with the music, and the dance appears to come from the air. The vision dissolves as the tune fades into silence. Peter is gazing rapt, lost to the barren reality of his surroundings. The old people have come in, drawn by the music).

FATHER MOORE : Peter ?

(He is dead to external impressions).

FATHER MOORE (*plucking him by the sleeve*) : Peter, boy !

(He makes a vague movement with his hands across his eyes).

FATHER MOORE (*laughingly*) : What a dreamer you are to be sure ! Pull yourself together, lad.

PETER : I'm sorry. I was lost in the wonder of it.

MRS. KEVILLE : Yeh, what great wonder's in a tune ? Every wild tramp an' blind beggar going the roads could give you tunes to last a life-time.

FATHER MOORE : It was a pleasant tune—light and delicate. Dull as my ear is, I could feel that.

PETER (*half to himself, regretfully*) : Pity, that it should pass so quickly !

FATHER MOORE : What's that, boy ? Why if 'twere longer, 'twould lose half its virtue ? 'Twould become tedious.

PETER : Tedious ? Surely, Father, such things as we've seen could never grow tedious.

FATHER MOORE : Why, what do you mean ? I've seen nothing.

PETER : Nothing ? (*Earnestly*) You're not in earnest, Father ?

FATHER MOORE : What was there to see beyond this pleasant kitchen—you playing in the fireplace—we three listening ? What else could there be ?

PETER (*going eagerly to his father*) : You saw, father ? You're different—your blood is in my veins.

MARTIN : God's name, what could I see, boy ?

PETER : You, mother—you surely ?

MRS. KEVILLE : O have sense, boy, have sense.

MARTIN : What was to be seen, Peter ? Tell us, boy.

PETER (*reconstructing the images of his fancy*) : Spring was there Father Spring dancing in the woods There was music somewhere music o' strings mixing with the dance an' the tune then someone plucked me by the sleeve and—

MRS. KEVILLE : Stop ! Stop ! Peter, that's a mad fancy, the like men see and they in the horrors.

MARTIN (*earnestly*) : So help me, boy, there was nothing here but a bit o' music and our four selves.

FATHER MOORE (*kindly but firmly*) : Peter, lad, you musn't give way to this folly. Your senses deceive you. Can't you see that it is all a wild delusion ? Forget it as you'd forget a bad dream.

MRS. KEVILLE : Be said by his word, boy. The priest knows. He's for your good.

MARTIN : Father Moore was ever wise, Peter. No one ever had luck and he to belittle his words.

FATHER MOORE : You must use your will, boy, to strangle this wild wandering of your reason. When this Something outside yourself begins to clamour turn your mind to common things—to the work of the farm—to sowing and reaping—to buying and selling in the market-place—and you'll defeat it. Believe me, lad, I speak out of my regard for you.

PETER : Why should I strangle what makes my life beautiful ? That would be to war on God, Who gave me to see.

FATHER MOORE : Boy, I lose patience with you.

MRS. KEVILLE : It's a terrible thing setting your will up against the priest.

PETER : O, no, mother. No, indeed ; I'd die first.

FATHER MOORE : Hush, Mrs. Keville, you wrong him.

PETER (*going to his shelf of books and searching out a little volume*) : Here's a book you once gave me, Father Moore.

FATHER MOORE : I remember. What of it ?

PETER : Would you have told the holy man who wrote this to strangle his visions and go and buy an' sell in the market-place ?

FATHER MOORE : My dear boy, do you realise what you are saying ? These things were of God. Yours

PETER : Mine, too, must be of God, for they are good. You think I'm gone in my wits—all of you. Think so ! You'd have said the same to St. John and he to tell you the things written here I'm—I'm sorry—but my head is burning. I'll go out for a little into the fresh night.

FATHER MOORE (*kindly*) : I'll be going with you a little way. I have a call to make down the road, and I'll be glad of your company. If I have been—well—a little rough with you, Peter, don't mind. Even an old priest can blunder.

MARTIN : No, no, Father, don't say that.

MRS. KEVILLE : When will you be back, Peter ?

PETER (*passing out*) : I'm not sure. In a little time. But you needn't wait. (*He moves away*).

FATHER MOORE : Look, Martin, take him gently. It's folly to argue—it only excites him. We may be all wrong. Indeed I begin to feel that we are. I begin to see light. And in the name of God don't worry, Mrs. Keville. There's no need—none whatever.

MARTIN : You think that, Father ?

FATHER MOORE : I do—I do indeed, Martin. I have to go now. He'll be waiting. I'll call again to-morrow. God bless ye.

MARTIN, MRS. KEVILLE : You too, Father.

(*The priest passes out*).

MRS. KEVILLE (*despairingly, sitting down*) : We're lost, Martin.

MARTIN : What's that ?

MRS. KEVILLE : Better he should be dead !

MARTIN : Don't talk wild, woman. How many a man gets a twist and is made right again ? Look how gentle he is—no blind rages or anything at all.

MRS. KEVILLE : His wits are clear gone.

MARTIN : Don't say that, Nora.

MRS. KEVILLE : Setting himself up against the priest like that !—he that used to be so shy an' quiet always. And seeing things like a person bewitched. My heart stopped dead with the fear.

MARTIN : There was some queer glimmer of reason in his words for all that. The priest himself felt it. He was driving at something beyond us.

MRS. KEVILLE : There wasn't a spark o' sense in his words from first to last. There's a curse on that fife ! The stranger, for all his gentle ways, had the evil eye or something.

MARTIN : There's no such thing, Nora. (*Suddenly*) Look, if he didn't leave the fife behind him.

MRS. KEVILLE (*excited*) : What's that ? O, God be blessed ! Give it to me.

MARTIN : Why so ?

MRS. KEVILLE (*feverishly*) : Give it to me, Martin ?

MARTIN : Here. What are you going to do with it ?

MRS. KEVILLE : Stir the fire to a blaze. Quick, quick, before he comes back. Such a chance may never come our way again.

MARTIN : It isn't to burn it you'd be, Nora ?

MRS. KEVILLE : Hurry, I tell you. Don't stand there looking at me. Quick, quick, for Heaven's sake !

(He hesitates. She seizes the poker and plunges it into the heart of the flame).

MARTIN : Hold, Nora, hold.

MRS. KEVILLE : This devil's thing will never trouble his mind again !

MARTIN : You musn't, Nora—you musn't. Give it back to me.

MRS. KEVILLE : I won't. (*She raises her arm in the act of casting it into the fire*).

MARTIN (*seizing her uplifted arm*) : Stop, woman ! Stop ! God in Heaven, do you know what you're doing ?

MRS. KEVILLE (*facing him*) : Bringing peace to his mind.

MARTIN : Setting him stark, staring mad maybe. Take care, Nora. That little instrument—'tis more than his life to him.

MRS. KEVILLE : 'Tis a wicked thing . . . But I'm—I'm afeard. You've frightened me, Martin.

MARTIN : God knows what might happen, Nora.

MRS. KEVILLE : Wouldn't we hide it so, and say 'tis lost ? No harm can come of that.

MARTIN (*doubtfully*) : I don't know . . . But I won't say against it. It don't matter so long as the fife is there.

MRS. KEVILLE (*thrusting the fife into his hands*) : Here—hide it then. Inside your coat—anywhere. Make haste ! (*He slips the instrument inside his coat*). And look, here's that round ruler left by the carpenter. I'll toss it into the fire instead.

MARTIN : I—I don't see, Nora ?

MRS. KEVILLE : He to come in on us, we could let on 'twas the shell o' the fife burning. We'll know then, God's light to us, what to do. There ! (*She flings the ruler into the blaze*). How quick it catches fire.

MARTIN : 'Twas as well seasoned as the fife itself. Look, 'tis only a red shell already. (*Startled*) What's that ?

MRS. KEVILLE : Peter ! He's hurrying back. Heaven direct us, Martin, to do what's best.

MARTIN : No crossing him, Nora. Remember the priest's warning.

MRS. KEVILLE : Whisht ! Whisht !

(*The latch is raised. Peter comes in with eager step*).

MRS. KEVILLE (*playfully*) : Ah, I knew the hunger would soon drive you home, Peter. (*Mothering him*) Sit here. I'll have the tea in a minute. You could be eating the bread and meat against the time 'tis ready.

PETER : My fife, mother ? I thought I left it here.

MRS. KEVILLE (*lightly*) : Yeh, don't bother with that till you're after eating.

PETER : Where is it ? The priest is waiting for me.

MRS. KEVILLE : It's somewhere around. Sit down and have your tea. Slip out, Martin, and tell the priest not to mind waiting.

PETER : No, father. I couldn't look at food till I find it. (*He rummages among the things on the shelves. They watch him covertly.*)

MRS. KEVILLE : Glory be to God, Peter, you're like a child looking for a little toy.

PETER (*turning to her*) : Where have you put it ?

MRS. KEVILLE : I disremember, Peter. 'Twould be no great loss anyway. Little it's brought you but distraction and night wandering.

PETER : Where is it, father ?

MARTIN : Don't upset yourself over nothing, boy. Your mother threw it somewhere tidying up.

MRS. KEVILLE : Sure, glory be to goodness, you could buy the like for a couple of crowns.

PETER : What have you done with it, mother ? Tell me—tell me, for God's sake.

MRS. KEVILLE : Whatever I've done 'twas for your good, Peter.

PETER : My good ? Mother, don't keep me like this. Where is the fife ? Get it for me.

MRS. KEVILLE : I can't, Peter.

PETER : Can't ?

MRS. KEVILLE : I'm sorry, Peter. 'Tis burned. I was putting it on the shelf. It dropped in the fire by accident.

PETER : In the fire ? Good God ! (*He rushes towards the hearth.*)
O, why did you do it, mother ? Why ? Why ? My fife !

MARTIN (*moved*) : What matter, Peter, boy ? Take all the money you need to buy another.

MRS. KEVILLE : For pity sake, don't look so white an' scared, boy ? What was it at best little more than a toy ?

PETER : My fife and all its music burned.

MARTIN : Don't, boy ; don't.

PETER : A little heap of ashes !

MRS. KEVILLE : 'Twas cursed, Peter.

PETER : 'Twas blessed. It made me one with the angels.

MARTIN : Peter, boy !

PETER : I'm crippled now—crippled an' blind for ever

(He flings himself with a hopeless gesture into a seat, burying his head in his hands. There is a pained silence. The priest returns. He is startled coming on the scene).

FATHER MOORE : Why, what's this ? What has happened ?

MRS. KEVILLE (*awkwardly*) : Wisha, nothing very much, Father.

FATHER MOORE : What's troubling you, Peter ?

PETER : My fife—'tis gone Burned.

FATHER MOORE : Burned ? O, no.

PETER : A little heap o' red ashes the thing I loved. (*His head droops again into his hands*).

FATHER MOORE : Why, under Heaven, did ye do this ? (*They are silent and constrained*). What tempted ye to such an act of folly ?

MRS. KEVILLE (*challengingly*) : Snatching the poisoned berries from a child's hand—is that folly, Father ? God did it maybe to save him from himself.

FATHER MOORE : Look at your boy, Mrs. Keville. (*To Martin*)
You've nearly broken your son's heart, Martin.

MARTIN (*moved*) : Don't say that, Father.

FATHER MOORE : I warned you both. Ye paid no heed. See what's come of it.

MRS. KEVILLE : O, Father, don't be hard on us. (*She signs to Martin*).

MARTIN (*quietly touching his sleeve*) : Father, one moment ?

FATHER MOORE : Well ?

MARTIN : Come here. (*He motions him to come aside*).

FATHER MOORE : What is it ?

MARTIN (*opening his coat*) : Look, Father Moore.

FATHER MOORE (*in surprise*) : What's this? The fife!

MARTIN (*smiling*) : 'Tis so.

FATHER MOORE : And in the name of Heaven, Martin, what's the meaning of this deception?

MARTIN : Forgive us, Father. We're dull and stupid, Nora an' myself. She wanted to burn it, but I held her back. I was afraid. She threw the ruler into the fire instead. Here, give it back to him—you, Father? We—we couldn't see him like that.

(The priest goes to Peter, who has been too absorbed in his grief to notice this scene).

FATHER MOORE : Peter, lad? (*He looks up with eyes full of sadness*). Cheer up, boy—God is kind. Maybe I can charm that fife back again for you?

PETER (*sadly*) : You can't do miracles, Father.

FATHER MOORE : Who knows, my son? Look, Peter. (*He produces the fife*).

PETER : My fife? O, Father.

FATHER MOORE : Take it and be happy, boy. Those two were—only joking. They never thought to hurt you. They love you too much for that.

MRS. KEVILLE : That's God's truth, Peter. I'm sorry. I'm only a poor ignorant woman who meant well.

PETER (*radiant*) : My fife! Praise be to God a thousand times! I'll go out into the fields making fine music again. I feel a new tune gathering in my mind. This little room would stifle it.

MARTIN : What kind of a tune, boy?

PETER (*exultant*) : A bright tune—brighter than foamy bubbles on a well.

FATHER MOORE : And gay and tender, Peter?

PETER : Aye, Father—gay as the dancing sun the Easter morning. (*He goes out. The notes of the fife are heard in the joyful mood of a soul released from pain. As the music fades away there is a moment's charmed stillness*).

FATHER MOORE : How good it is ! It makes the night holy.

MARTIN : 'Tis how he have the gift of the poets an' the rhymers ?

FATHER MOORE : I was blind, God forgive me. I understand now.

MARTIN : He's very happy in himself, Father ? Happier than us, I think ?

FATHER MOORE : Aye, Martin, our feet are only on the earth.

MRS. KEVILLE : And Peter's, Father ?

FATHER MOORE : Peter's, Mrs. Keville ? . . . His feet are on the stars.

Curtain.

14th January, 1927.

The Strange Case of C. K. Munro

By ANDREW E. MALONE.

"He's considered a coming man by the literary and theatrical people of England. Somerset Maugham thinks he's the most brilliant of the younger dramatists. I've heard that Mr. Shaw is quite keen about his work." So Miss Jean Cadell informed a New York interviewer who sought information about Mr. Munro when his two plays were about to be produced in America. She might have added, so that America should be suitably impressed, that Desmond McCarthy said, "Mr. C. K. Munro is, of all the young dramatists, the one most likely to produce a masterpiece." This is very high praise indeed for a dramatist who is yet under forty, but who has produced six plays of distinction. Alone of the younger dramatists¹ he seems destined to carry the traditions of Shaw, Galsworthy and Granville Barker into the looser, more hectic atmosphere of the post-war theatre. In the division which Mr. Ashley Dukes has made between "Forerunners" and "the Youngest Drama" Mr. Munro finds his place more easily among the "Forerunners," though Mr. Dukes has not classed him with them. That is not to say that Mr. Munro is not up-to-date and original—it is merely to suggest that at a time when dramatic technique has given place temporarily to what is loosely called "expressionism," a label which can be made to cover all the sins of commission and omission of a dramatist, Mr. Munro takes pains to shape his plays. If he transfers some of the pains to his audiences and his readers he will have achieved his object. The strange thing about Mr. Munro is that his plays have an object. They are not merely "plays," not merely pieces of work which are calculated to produce a good income for their author and to give him that fame which consists of continuous references in the gossip columns of illustrated newspapers. The fervour which led Mr. Shaw to turn to the theatre as others would have turned to the Church has brought Mr. Munro to the theatre also. That he has a philosophy which is as definite as that of Mr. Shaw there can be no doubt, and he displays the methodical mind of Mr. Galsworthy. He has not that faith in human perfectibility by governmental interference which characterised the older dramatists, and he emphasises more than they did the importance of the individual.

He is an uncompromising realist, who never errs by showing too little. He reveals everything on his stage, and sometimes in his efforts to convey dullness and boredom he becomes dull and boring himself. That also might be said of Mr. Galsworthy or Mr. Shaw, but it seems certain that Mr. Munro has learned more of the elements of the craft of playwriting from Mr. Galsworthy than from any other dramatist. But Mr. Munro is an Irishman, with all the hardness of an Irishman, and he has not that surplus of pity for all created things which so often leads Mr. Galsworthy into sentimentality. In thought, as in method, Mr. Munro is clear, cold, aloof, dissecting with as little feeling as a medical student in an anatomy class the follies of human nature. Using the same material, Mr. Galsworthy is overwhelmed by pity and Mr. Shaw would be brilliantly witty in leading his audience to a reasoned solution. For Mr. Munro there is only one problem where Messrs. Shaw and Galsworthy had discovered many. It is the problem of human nature, and as the problem is so vast and so varied he makes no attempt to offer any solution. He recognises that the problem, in so far as it is a problem at all, is collective and historical; the solution, when a solution is sought, must be individual and ethical. Of faith in Parliaments and their Acts Mr. Munro seems to have very little, and in this lack of faith he very accurately reflects the spirit of his time, that time which is suffering the disillusionment of the war and its aftermath, and which witnesses with detached equanimity the almost worldwide breakdown of nineteenth century democracy. Yet, despite all this, his plays proclaim him to be what would in pre-war days have been called a Liberal, but which is now more generally termed Labour, in his political outlook. The violence of the "new drama" and the younger dramatists of the European Continent is not his. He has the cold logic and the irony of Mr. Shaw, but he has nothing of Mr. Shaw's brilliant wit.

The career of Mr. Munro as a dramatist opened in 1915 with the production by the Stage Society in London of a play called *Wanderers*, which did not attract much attention outside the circle of dramatic critics and the members of the Society. The war ran its course, taking Mr. Munro and many millions of others with it, so no other play came from him until 1921, when *At Mrs. Beam's* was produced also by the Stage Society which has produced all his plays to date. *At Mrs. Beam's* had a very successful

run in London on the commercial stage, as it had also in the English provincial towns, and it is now being performed in America. This very amusingly ironic comedy of English boarding-house life made the name of C. K. Munro widely and favourably known to the ordinary playgoer, so widely and so favourably indeed that the temptation towards stereotyping which is expected of authors and actors must have been great. To the pleased astonishment of all who feared that he might succumb to the temptation, his next play, *The Rumour*, was as different from his comedy as it could possibly be. *The Rumour* was produced in 1922, and was followed by a play of a somewhat similar kind, *Progress*, in 1924. Then in the same year, 1924, came *Storm*, a comedy in the manner and largely of the material of *At Mrs. Beam's*, which also had a successful London run after its production by the Stage Society. Then in June, 1926, came *The Mountain*, a reversion to the manner of *The Rumour* and *Progress*. Thus apparently there are two separate dramatists producing plays under the name of C. K. Munro. There is the very serious-minded Mr. Munro, who is occupied with the great social, political and ethical problems of his time; and there is the Mr. Munro who can laugh at the antics of Miss Shoe and Miss Gee in their surroundings of boarding-houses and hydropathic hotels. But that is superficial, and there is in reality only the very serious-minded Mr. Munro, who knows that all the mischief in the world is caused by gossiping fools and knaves in the home or in the state.

Irishmen are popularly regarded in England as frivolous persons who can be depended upon to take nothing seriously. That estimate is the opposite of the fact, as Mr. Shaw pointed out when he placed Larry Doyle on the stage. It is true that Irishmen with an English audience very often act as they know they are expected to act, but that in no way invalidates the statement that Irishmen are really very serious persons, witty and ironic, but with no sense of humour as the Englishman understands humour. An Irishman would die of shame if he thought he was being laughed at by a crowd. Goldsmith and Sheridan were serious men, as was Oscar Wilde, and as Mr. Bernard Shaw is in our day. All these Irishmen wrote comedies for English audiences, but their comedy is not English comedy as H. H. Davies or Somerset Maugham would write it. The comedy of the Irishman is satire sweetened by wit; the comedy of the English-

man is humour flavoured by sentiment. The comedy of the Irishman very often approaches tragedy, and at its best it is tragic-comedy. So Mr. Munro is something of a puzzle as was Mr. Shaw for the many years during which he was busy "showing-up" everything that seemed to him to be wrong in England. The process of showing-up has now been undertaken by Mr. Munro; but instead of showing-up England and the English as Mr. Shaw did, Mr. Munro shows up Everyman and the World as they seem to him in all the fatuity of post-war bungling. There is little verbal wit in the plays of Mr. Munro, because Mr. Munro is an Irishman with a difference. That is to say, he is a Belfastman, as is Mr. St. John Ervine; and no one has yet discovered that Mr. Ervine is witty when he uses his sledge-hammer because he is without a rapier. The atmosphere of Puritanism and fanatical zeal that is normal to Belfast is not conducive to the development of wit. Life there is too strenuous—"life is real, life is earnest"—to permit of trimmings or ornamentation. Belfast could produce a *John Ferguson* or *The Magnanimous Lover*, but it could never produce *She Stoops to Conquer* or *The Playboy of the Western World*. In the plays of Mr. Munro is all the earnestness of the Belfastman, the earnestness of the Irishman with his irony but without his wit. All of his private life that is relevant to his work was disclosed by Mr. Munro in a letter to his American publisher, Mr. Alfred A. Knopf: "I was born," he wrote, "in 1889, at Portrush, Co. Antrim, Ireland. I am, in consequence, from Ulster. But I have no politics; also as a consequence I am thirty-seven years old. I am by profession a Civil Servant in the Ministry of Labour. I was educated at Harrow and Cambridge (Pembroke). My real name is MacMullan, which is my grandfather's; Munro is the corresponding grandmother's name. I use it not only as a name to write under, but am known by it, and mostly by it, to most people with whom I am in contact through writing and the consequences of it. I am married to an actress, whose stage name is Mary Sumner, and who played leading parts on a good many occasions with Forbes Robertson in his American tours." He is said to have written novels, but so little is known of them that even an American interviewer failed to discover anything about them. He is thus described by Miss Jean Cadell, who created the leading characters in *At Mrs. Beam's* and *Storm*: "Mr. Munro has a very uncommon personality. Very keen eyes,

piercing, in fact. One has the sense that nothing escapes him. He is an elusive personality and a great listener. . . . There is no vagueness about him. He knows every character thoroughly, exactly what he means, and the value of what he's got. But he's very modest, very shy, very non-theatrical. He doesn't go about in the theatre world at all." His plays very accurately reflect that personality. Nothing escapes him, and he takes good care that nothing shall escape his audiences. There is certainly nothing vague about what he wants to say, and if what he actually says be not comprehended, or only incompletely comprehended, the fault cannot be traced to him. "He catches every shade of meaning. If he doesn't understand something, he has it repeated. He gets to the bottom of everything psychologically." Just how he gets to the bottom of things matters little. What does matter very much is that he gets to the bottom.

Look at his two comedies first. He has himself definitely labelled *At Mrs. Beam's* and *Storm* comedies, so that there can be no misunderstanding of their purpose. But was that purpose solely to amuse and entertain, as so many thousands of persons have been led to suppose? These two comedies are studies in futility, the waste it involves, the pathos of it, even the fun of it. But it is the waste and the pathos that interest Mr. Munro, as it is the fun that appeals to audiences generally. It is permissible to doubt that Mr. Munro saw any of the fun at all. As a good citizen of Belfast, brought up in an atmosphere of contemptuous pity of the futility of his compatriots of "the South and West of Ireland," he would not see anything funny in Miss Shoe or Miss Gee. They would be simply nuisances at which one would laugh only in desperation or contempt. Miss Shoe is a permanent boarder at Mrs. Beam's boarding-house in London, and she is the play, though she may share it nominally with nine other people, six permanent boarders, two temporary boarders, and Mrs. Beam herself. Into Mrs. Beam's house, which is as full of wasted life as a workhouse, come Mr. Dermott and Laura Pasquale to set the inmates by the ears and to depart finally with all the portable property. But it is Miss Shoe who makes the play memorable, and Miss Shoe is just the old maid so very commonly and unfavourably known to most boarding-houses. But here she is superb, here she is the epitome of all the old-maidish gossips in the world. Her futility is magnificent. Hear her in full spate as the

curtain rises and the gramophone ceases : " Yes, it's curious how mistakes like that get about. There are two of them, you see, not one. Mr. Durrows, I was telling Mrs. Bett that there are two Mr. Lloyd Georges, not one, as is commonly supposed. One of them is a Welsh bard that sings at the Welsh Druid festivals, and has a very fine voice, and is well known for his learning, and of course is *not* married. While the other was the Prime Minister of England, and is married, and has three children. The two are, of course, connected—cousins they are—but they're not the same. Now you can support me in that assertion, Mr. Durrows, I'm sure." Just the kind of imbecile chatter that sometimes makes a holiday so tiring. This opening scene in the drawingroom is splendidly conceived and executed as it opens out into a picture of the normal life of the house and its occupants, only distorted enough to be whimsical, and rigidly restrained to prevent it degenerating into the extravagance of farce. When Mr. Dermott and his lady companion arrive Miss Shoe is quite certain that the lady is not Mrs. Dermott, whatever else she may be. These two get to work at once ; the lady to infatuate a foolish Scottish boy among the boarders, and Dermott to carry on an intrigue with a languishing grass-widow. When an evening paper announces that " the man who kills the women " is in London, Miss Shoe is convinced that Dermott is the man. " Well, I mean, dear, if you don't realise However, that is not all. Finally, the date that this man disappeared from Paris was April 25, St. Barnabas's Day—St. Barnabas the Elder, that is, not the one that went to Capri, his is the 17th of September—April 25th. Now do you know what day the Dermotts arrived here ? Do you remember ? Well, it was exactly April the 27th. Now, how long does it take to come from Paris ? A week, I agree, one would have said—a hundred years ago. That's a hundred years ago. That would have been proof against ; not proof for, but proof against—in fact, overwhelming proof against. That would have decided a court of law against, in spite of other proofs in favour—the other way, don't you see. But nowadays it doesn't take more than two days at the outside." So Miss Shoe's spate of verbose and useless information continues, lightened occasionally by aphorisms on the necessity of being properly married or single, the inutility of oaths, the veniality of revoking at Bridge, and many other aspects of life and morals, " a woman of the world sees little things," as she

says. So she chatters on, boring and malicious, as is the way of the thousands of Miss Shoes which represent the world's superfluity of femininity. She is futility itself, wearing out a life that is useless in an effort at altruism that twists in the making. Every member of an audience is brought into close contact with Miss Shoe because Mr. Munro makes everyone a temporary boarder at Mrs. Beam's. If Miss Shoe and her like were not so common in everyday life Mr. Munro's presentation of her would be intolerably boring. As it is, she is only caricatured by the compression of her interminable harangues and the confinement of her encyclopaedic knowledge.

Miss Gee in *Storm* is another finished study in spinsterhood. She is the play, despite the fact that the girl Storm gives the play its title. The theme is Miss Gee and her manoeuvres, under cover of the purest friendship, to detach husbands from their wives and to focus their thoughts upon herself. She is the candid friend, generous, flattering, and farseeing, a balm to all who believe themselves to be misunderstood. "Men never seem to care for the best sort of women," Miss Gee says when her victims are not attracted by herself. *Storm* opens splendidly, as indeed do all Mr. Munro's plays, with Miss Gee in full swing on the Battle of Tinderley Downs. This was supposed to have been fought in 1761 between spinsters and wives. "But the most comic part of it all," says Miss Gee, "is that no one knows what it was all about." "I expect the husbands knew," said the plain-spoken Mrs. Bolland. They are seated in the lounge of a small hydropathic hotel, a place not dissimilar in atmosphere from Mrs. Beam's house. Miss Gee has persuaded "Sammy," otherwise the Hon. Arthur Blount, a very dull and somewhat stupid individual, that his wife does not understand him, and that he could be "first-rate" with the right wife. She persuades him, in a very amusing scene, to write to his wife and tell her that love must be a natural harmony of free and equal spirits, and that for the future happiness of both they had better part. Into the lounge comes Storm in the company of a vain singer named Denis Welch. "Sammy" is captivated by Storm, but the form of his first capitulation is the repetition of Miss Gee's tags—she is "first-rate," but her "husband" is not; they ought to part, and he will "look after her." When asked how he would do that, he says that he will find her some work. Finally she surrenders, and with some

hesitancy consents to an elopement. At the last moment he insists upon taking with him some socks because they were knitted by his wife. This is the first intimation that Storm has had that a wife exists. It is a scene of genuine pathos, subtle and splendidly achieved. Meanwhile Miss Gee is busy detaching Welch from Storm, while Storm detaches Blount from the influence of Miss Gee. Blount's wife arrives unexpectedly, and rather unconvincingly, at the hotel. Blount, of course, returns to his wife; Miss Gee tackles a new arrival; and the curtain falls. But what of Storm? It seems almost that Mr. Munro had forgotten her, and she is left in a vague situation, with a hint that her singer may treat her better in the future. In the theatre such vague treatment is not satisfactory, and it suggests weak craftsmanship in Mr. Munro. Nevertheless, *Storm* is a better play than *At Mrs. Beam's*. The characters are more thoroughly studied, and more finished in presentation; they have depth, and are not mere silhouettes. In both plays there is the comedy of human nature, easily recognisable, but sometimes as tedious as the comedy of real life. Bores are only funny when they are at a distance, or when inflicting themselves upon other persons.

If it be by his comedies that Mr. Munro is best known, it is by his serious drama that he will ultimately be judged. He has now produced three plays, which in their scope cover all the major problems of our time—wars and the making of wars, spiritual values and material values, the crowd and the individual. What a symbolist like Karel Capek challenges in *R.U.R.* and *The Insects*, or Expressionists like Elmer Rice or Ernst Toller in *The Adding Machine* and *Masses and Man*, Mr. Munro sets out in terms of stark reality in *The Rumour* (1922), *Progress* (1924), and *The Mountain* (1926). None of these plays has got beyond the comparatively private performances of the Stage Society, though all of them are worthy of the consideration of managers in search of possible stage successes. When Mr. Lee Schubert, the American theatre magnate, says he came to England to secure sixty plays and could only find six, he forgot to mention that he did not seek the best but only the potentially popular plays, and he overlooked Mr. Munro! In these three plays Mr. Munro proves that he is not only a good listener and a good psychologist, but that he can reconstruct minds and words in terms of real life in the form of drama. Where Capek attracts attention by his fan-

tastic symbols, Munro compels attention by verisimilitude. Capek became famous by his robots and his insects, but Mr. Munro has been left in the shade with his perfectly-presented human beings. But the theatre is not the place for problems! Why not? The greater, the most interesting, and the most exciting, part of life consists of problems, and if drama is to have any connection with life its greater part must also consist of problems. If the problem be presented meanly, as in *The Vortex*, or sensationally, as in *Spring Cleaning*, or fantastically, as in *R.U.R.*, the theatre has a place for it. Is there not a place in the theatre for a problem when it is presented sincerely and realistically? But the world is tired of problems! Of course it is, it always was; but it will be overwhelmed by problems if it makes no attempt to understand them and to solve them. Malignant diseases are not cured by ignoring them and the pressing ethico-social problems of our time will not be cured by liberal doses of syncopated musical comedy. It is obvious that ethics is in a transitional state, in common with all else dependent upon it for stability, and there is no point in deploring effects without reference to the governing causes. These effects are exposed by Mr. Munro only in his efforts to discover and display the causes.

When General Bernhardi expressed the opinion, openly and bluntly, that states were not governed by the same ethical rules as individuals he merely echoed Machiavelli, but he was held to public execration by newspapers which were conducted precisely upon that belief. Political ethics *ought to be* the same as individual ethics. That is the opinion of civilised individuals in civilised countries, and it is the opinion of Mr. Munro. In *The Rumour* attention is concentrated upon the problem of war. By means of a baseless rumour deliberately set going by the capitalist interests of a great power two small powers are driven to war. Before the war begins it has been arranged which of the small states shall win, and who shall have the spoils. The political strings are pulled, and the big state, with another as big, come in on the side of the financiers. At the end of the war the victorious small state gets only satisfied honour and the debts, while the big states get "an extraordinarily rich commercial connection and sphere of influence." As displayed by Mr. Munro, patriotism is indeed "the last refuge of a scoundrel." The rumour which starts the war comes from financiers in London, to the effect

that the Lorians have attacked the Przimians. "Well anyway, here's to our success in starting all these dirty dogs in the government out of their skins with a rumour of a Lorian attack." So easily is the thing done by a drinking party? The rumour gets into diplomacy, into the streets, and stirs public fears through the press. As a result of diplomatic handling there is a riot in a cafe in Przimiprzak, which is used to promote a Stock Exchange crisis. A meeting of Lorians in Przimia leads to conspiracy and the assassination of an English girl. Everything is "set fair" for war, and the troops depart with popular acclamation. There are casualties, and the man in the street finds that his son has been killed. At the Peace Conference there is "complete accord"—the little belligerents are ignored, and the play ends with the financiers reckoning their profits.

In *The Rumour* the method employed is that of all Mr. Munro's plays; it has brought him into conflict with most of the critics. The method is expository, which reveals everything, and not the usual dramatic method, which reveals only the significant things. As a consequence there is much repetition, just as in real life. It is evidently Mr. Munro's purpose to show that it is the *little* things that count, and the little things can be emphasised only by repetition and by photographic realism. In defending himself against his critics Mr. Munro says: "In dramatic presentation, condensation is at the present day so essential that to bring the matter within the bounds of ordinary representation, it is imperative to cut away all that can go without hurt to the general structure. . . . Certain it is that an Elizabethan audience would not have found this play excessively wordy and long—however dull they or anyone else might find it—though that is one complaint that the breathless audience of to-day in the commercial theatre would doubtless bring against it." It may be presumed that Mr. Munro has written his plays with the purpose of moving, and perhaps enlightening, the breathless audiences in commercial theatres. He is not trying to influence an Elizabethan audience, so his reference to that audience lacks point. It is certainly true that Mr. Munro succeeds in making human life almost as tedious, as dull, and as fatuous, as it appears in a daily newspaper, and there can be no doubt that his plays would be more effective were they condensed to suit the needs of audiences and managers of to-day. He need not write like

Mr. Noel Coward or Mr. Frederick Lonsdale to achieve this, but he must cease to write as if he were merely the recording agency for the characters he sets upon the stage.

Progress is a satirical exposition that would delight the heart of Dean Inge, as it shows the efforts of Boom to bring the blessings of civilisation to a savage people at a very excellent profit to himself. It is the most bitter of Mr. Munro's plays, and except for a little wry humour, introduced to heighten the satirical effect, it is a deadly onslaught upon the material conception of progress which was so dear to Victorians. It is Mr. Munro's contribution to the growing revolt against that conception, as it is a literal "showing-up" of its effects. "The problem which forms the main conflict in the play," says Mr. Munro, "is the struggle between material progress—progress in the acquisition of wealth, in the struggle for the complete conquest of matter—and what I may call spiritual progress. The conflict between spiritual and material good, between the ideal and the practical, has, I suppose, always been intense. Any idealist must perpetually be confronted with the dilemma that the ideal course is often also the unpractical one. . . . It seems to me that true statesmanship lies only in those who combine the power to see the ideal, with the drive and the energy, the eloquence and the knowledge, to *impose* their view on their country." Statesmanship at the moment is just as Mr. Munro defines it—but its ideals are not his. In every case, in Russia, in America, in Italy, in England, the ideal is material; society everywhere is acquisitive, and dictatorship no more desires a change than did democratic liberalism. In the play the only result of the wars, intrigues, and barter by which human populations change ownership, as does the stock on a farm, is the invention of an unbreakable cup. As the Keeper of the Coffee Stall says, "There's progress in some things . . ." Essentially there is no change, and the millions of little people pursue their millions of little ways without reference to any grand scheme. Even in this play there is no progress, no change; it has all been said before more pointedly and more interestingly by Dean Inge, Professor J. B. Bury, and Anatole France. John Stuart Mill hoped that mankind would "continue to improve." As mankind, evidently, does not continue to improve, the word *progress* now evokes only ironic laughter. Except from Mr. H. G. Wells! The irony of Mr. Munro will not assist in restoring faith, until

the moral of this play be stressed and the story released from the voluminous folds of the style in which it is now completely lost.

The search for material progress leads, has always led, and will always lead to war. Such is Mr. Munro's reading of human history, and his three plays might easily be read as footnotes to Mr. Well's *Outline of History*. In *The Rumour* and *Progress* he is as negative as was Anatole France in *L'Ile des Pingouins*. That there is need for a new standard of values, particularly spiritual values, few will be found to deny; but Mr. Munro offers no new standard. "My policy for Ireland consists in equal parts of Home Rule and the Ten Commandments," said the late T. M. Kettle; Mr. Munro seems to offer the same policy to the world, emphasising especially the Ten Commandments. In *The Mountain* (1926) the Wandering Elder says, "Inasmuch as men are inhuman they need tyrants; inasmuch as men will not listen to the authority of God they must bow to the authority of man. That is the great truth—and you little men may replace each other as fast as you like, but the great truth remains." In this play there is revolution within a community which at the end is as it was in the beginning. Captain Yevan begins by beating his orderly, goes on to insult a deacon under the taunts of the Wandering Elder, is courtmartialled and reduced to the ranks, where he suffers all the pains and indignities he once inflicted. He is roused to revolt, starts a rebellion, and becomes Dictator. He tries to make the people rule themselves by electing a parliament, but its first act is to attempt his arrest. He escapes, and with the Wandering Elder retires to a monastery, while the old government returns to power. "You have achieved the only victory a man can achieve," says the Elder, "and that is victory over himself. And having achieved that, you are ready at last for the task for which I now come to claim you." "What is that?" asks Yevan. "To teach the people not to need a tyrant," answers the Elder.

It is possible that Mr. Munro is clear and certain in his own mind as to the ideal he would have mankind aspire to, but that clear-cut certainty is not to be extracted from his plays. Mere conquest over self cannot produce an ideal world any more than mere conquest of matter. So long as he is ironic and negative, as he mainly is, Mr. Munro is understandable; it is when he attempts to be positive that he collapses into mere wordiness, perhaps into mere windiness. His three "philosophical" plays have really

no philosophy which is applicable to the conditions of the contemporary world. He is aware of that when he makes his Wandering Elder ask : " How can the new arise out of the old ? " Since there seems to be no other way in which the new can arise, Mr. Munro's philosophy seems to end in stalemate. The three plays, *The Rumour*, *Progress* and *The Mountain* may be but parts of a very big scheme which Mr. Munro is slowly working out, and perhaps in time it may be possible to discover what it is that he desires. At present he is a voice in the wilderness, and all that can be gathered is that he has examined his fellow-humans and found them vile. He utters in hundreds of thousands of words : " Lord, what fools these mortals be ! " But he has set the world laughing at the antics of Miss Shoe and Miss Gee. And for that much will be forgiven him.

Cocks and Hens, produced a few weeks ago in London by the recently formed Forum Theatre Guild, seems to be again a reversion to Mr. Munro's comedy manner. Once more the scene is a hotel, and the comedy turns upon a lady who is misunderstood but much admired. But underlying that is much satire levelled at those pedantic folk who waste their lives comparing, emending, and editing Shakespearean texts. This play was chosen as the opening venture of the new Forum Theatre Guild, which is to be for London what the Theatre Guild is for New York, and it has had a poor reception from the critics. Mr. Ervine says : " There is a lost play in *Cocks and Hens*, but Mr. Munro could easily find it if he searched for it with a large blue pencil." There is a big work awaiting that pencil when Mr. Munro decides to use it.

Barnabe Rich and Ireland

By SEAN GHALL.

III.

When the sword-arm of Irish Ulster was broken, when fire, sword and famine had produced the quietude of seeming death, the long cherished plan of making the North "a better and a more godly England" was put into execution. Barnabe Rich aided this "Plantation" by his pen.

A New Description of Ireland :

Wherein is described the dispositions of the Irish whereunto they are inclined.

No lesse admirable to be perused than credible to be beleueed : neither vnprofitable nor vnpleasant to bee read and vnderstood, by those worthy cittizens of London that be now vndertakers in Ireland :

By Barnabe Rich, Gent :

Malui me diuitem esse, quam vocari.

Printed at London for Thomas Adams.

1610.

It was a firm belief of most Englishmen that God had made a mistake in bestowing the lovely Emerald Isle on the Irish. For centuries they unavailingly tried to rectify that "error." Edmund Spenser became lyrical in describing its natural beauties and advantages. Even Rich slid into eulogy. Writing to Lord Burghley in 1597, John Bell, Vicar of Christ Church, Dublin, epitomised the opinions fashionable for generations among his countrymen. When "godly measures"—famine, the sword, the poison cup, the torch, the halter, the emigrant ship—had made a "holy clearance" of the "natives," then "God's elect" could enter into the Promised Land. "I will not say, as Joshua and Caleb said, if the Lord have a favour unto us; but I will say, the Lord having a special love unto us, God hath given this Kingdom of Ireland to Her Majesty; a country most sweet, most wholesome, and most fruitful to dwell in; so full of springs, so full of lakes, so full of fish, so full of cattle, so full of fowl, that there is not a country upon the face of the earth more beneficent to the life of man than that is." The Irish commented in the words of the Psalmist: "They have said, 'Come, and let us root them out, that they be no more a people; and that the name

of Israel may be no more in remembrance.' ” In their “ inordinate pride,” which Rich spares no pains in accentuating, the Irish, too, regarded themselves as God’s chosen people, that in civilization, in culture, in sterling worth, were of finer fibre, of more noble mould than “ the barbarous English.”

French travellers have written almost as bitterly of the English as the English have of the Irish. Maitre Estienne Perlin, a contemporary of Barnabe Rich (1558), thus unburdens : “ It may be said of the English, neither in war are they brave ; nor in peace are they faithful ; and, as the Spaniard says, England is a good land with bad people They morally hate the French as their old enemies . . . and always call us *France chenesve* (knave), *France dogue* They are proud and seditious, with bad consciences, and are faithless to their word, as experience has taught. These villians hate all sorts of foreigners, and although they have a good land and a good country, they are constantly wicked and moved by every wind ; for now they will love a prince ; turn your hand, they will wish him killed or crucified There is no kind of order ; the people are reprobates and thorough enemies to good manners and letters, for they know not whether they belong to God or the Devil as to their manner of living, they are rather unpolite, for they belch at table without reserve or shame, even in the presence of persons of the greatest dignity They are great drunkards In France, justice is well administered, and not tyranny, as in England, which is the pest and ruin of a country ; for a kingdom ought to be governed, not in shedding human blood in such abundance that the blood flows in streams” *Satis !* National and religious prejudice in all lands, in every age, knows neither truth nor justice. The Great War proved that the contending peoples were not a whit more morally advanced than the hostile folk of the sixteenth century.

The fierce partizan is known by his avowed intention to “ tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth,” and Truth is the first casualty in his onslaught. He scorns to verify a statement because he is the sole repository of truth. The Present alone is his ; what comes under his eye represents what must happen elsewhere. The Past he contemns. Rigid righteous and rigid wise, he sees himself seated aloft, pure and serene, in a world steeped in vice and stupidity. Barnabe Rich is true to type. His

"The Honestie of this Age" mirrors the diseased part of London. He conceded that there were a few, a very few good women, but no good men, there. Everywhere "honesty" was dishonesty. His own tongue "could never flatter, lisse, nor lye," so he meant to "give the world new eyes to see into deformite." The way of popularity was "to sing lullaby to Folly"; there is no music so delightful as the soothing of sin. Virtue was dead.

"To speak against sin in this age is like the filling of Daneas Tubs." But as the world had become a "Brothell house of sinne" he would speak out—"shoot Folly as it flew." The result would be the approval of the good and the wise. He armed himself with the serene consciousness that he would rouse the ire of the adulterer, the thief, the drunkard . . . of every votary of the Seven Deadly Sins. "To be virtuous; why it is a capital crime; and there is nothing more dangerous than to be severely innocent." To be learned was to be poor and scorned. A Master of Arts and of seven Liberal Sciences had not the wherewithal to eat. He questioned a London tradesman as to how he might earn a competence: "Keep an Ale house, a Tobacco house, or a Brothell house." Rich casts much illumination on the manners and customs of London in this book. He is equally enlightening on Dublin in his "New Description."

There are three dedications to "The New Description." First, the Earl of Salesbury is informed that "books" are spread "bearing the names and Titles of Histories, of Summaries of Chronicles, etc., of divers other collections drawn from unworthy Authors; some of them printed, some others printed here in Ireland, by Papists, by lying Chroniclers, by idle Poets, by Bards, and Irish Rythmers, all of them containing matters of untruth." There seems to have been an active trade in books and manuscripts in Gaelic and Catholic centres, the only records of which lie in the numerous official Proclamations calling upon "loyal subjects" to destroy them. Rich affirmed that from such sources issued all manner of "disloyalties, treasons, superstitions," and so on. "The courteous and friendly reader, English or Irish, either Protestant or Papist," is next addressed. The counter criticisms Rich's denunciations engendered in London and Dublin brought astonished and wrathful answers. He was prompted by virtue, his censors by lies, vice, stupidity. He loves Ireland. "Though I finde fault with the Idolatry that is committed in the

country, yet I find no fault with the country itself, nor of the good number of people that are of Irish birth." Magnanimously he forgives his censors, "for I durst swear for them, they did it more for want of wit than for any malice they bear to my person." "Let him read a God's name, he shall find I have dealt plainly, without welt or gard." "I make no difference between the English or Irish, in respect of their birth, for I know there be worthy men in Ireland, as they are in England, though not in such generality, nor so many in number." Here it is the Nationalist who writes, for England appears as a cesspool of corruption in his non-Irish books. "There are too many of the English, that are planted in all parts of Ireland, that are no lesse superstitious, no less contentious both to God and the King then the most wilde or savage Irish man." Proudly he avers that he has "hunted their Pope from Saint Peter's Chair, to the seat of Anti-Christ." "There be a great many Papists in Dublin, that I doe love, and wish well unto; for can not a man love a papist, as he loveth a friend that is diseased."

Finally, the Corporation of London is addressed. By taking the lands and goods of the Irish of Ulster the English would be doing an act "acceptable in the presence of God," which would be "for the advancement of His Glöry, making way for the Gospell of Jesus Christ to be truly preached." Of course, the English would introduce more profitable husbandry. He describes the country round Coleraine, the only part of Ireland he actually knew outside Dublin, as "verie fertile," "a most pleasant place," "commodious both for Corne and Pasture," "a goodly country, called the Rowt, no better corn land in any part of Ireland, and it did . . . so abound with Conies, so exceeding fat, and therewith so sweete, as I never saw the like, neither in Ireland, nor in any other place where I have travailed." There is a glowing account of the fisheries of the North, the details of which he obtained, no doubt, in official Dublin. "Let it suffice, that as well for fish, for fowl, for Conies, for Cattle, and whatever is otherwise needful for man's sustenance, the whole realm of Ireland is as rich and fertile as any other Country in Christendom: yea and for all manner of fruits: as apples, pears, and plums, in many parts of the country."

"The Plantation cannot be but acceptable to the presence of God. How happy will it fall out for a number of poor people

in England that are oppressed with penury, by reason of the multitude that so superabound, whereby the scarcity of victuals doth the more exceed, that may be relieved by their own industry : for Ireland is able to render relief to 40,000 people."

To the alarming question that the English labourers and workmen who would go to Ireland would have their throats cut, Rich gave the perennial answer of those who really knew our land : "So that I see there be a number of them that are afraid, but it is of their own shadows. Ireland (God be praised) is in no such dangerous manner of plight. That doubt is dissolved, and the danger is past, for men may work as quietly in those places whereunto they are sent, as they might do if they were in Cheapside."

Even the historians who wrote so bitterly of Irish Ireland, of which they knew nothing, Richard Stanihurst and Edmund Campion, the English Jesuit, displeased Rich. Giraldus Cambrensis, Stanihurst, Campion—Papists—Liars ! Ignorance of Irish and Latin did not prevent him from passing judgment on the works of the Gaelic *literati* :—

"These lying authorities do evermore engender ignorance, and there is nothing that hath more lead the Irish into error than lying Historiographers, their Chroniclers, their Bards, their Rythmers, and other such their lying Poets, in whose writings they do more relie than do they in the holy Scriptures, and this rablement do at this day endeavour themselves to nothing else but to feed and delight them with matter most dishonest and shameful ; for in their speaking and writing they do nothing but flatter them in their ungracious humours, still opening the way with lying praises of their progenitors, what Rebellions they have stirred up, and how many mischiefs they have performed ; this is such a whetstone to their ambitions, desires, and being thus made drunk with these lying reports of their Ancestors worthiness that they think themselves to be reproached for ever, if they should not be apt and ready to run into all manner of mischief, as their fathers were afore them. From hence it cometh that being thus drowned in ignorance, they think it to be the true high-way to happiness, for every man to do what he list, and do therefore seek to free themselves for Law, Justice, and reason ; because they would not bē bridled, or compelled to obey, either to duty or honesty."

Had Rich been able to read them his national self-sufficiency would have been severely shaken, for these Gaels used the same abusive language as they received: "filthy Saxons," "savages," "cheats," "beasts," "monsters," "clods," "heretics."

Rich announces his superiority over such "liars":—

"I have used no other help than mine own experience, for my best method shall be, to speak nothing but what is true, and so to be approved. If there be any exceptions taken by Fools that be ignorant, I hope the wise and learned will make no worse construction than the matter doth import: for the rest that be of a wrangling disposition, let them do as they have done, fret and fume at that which they cannot contradict: let them join impudence to their ignorance, and because they cannot comprehend the sincerity of true religion, let them carpe and cavil against it, and let them never spare."

Except Derrick's "Image of Ireland," which he nowhere names, though internal evidence shows his use of it, Rich had no other sources of information on the Ireland beyond the walls of Dublin than these authors he so derided for their leniency.

Richard Stanihurst was the pride of Anglo-Ireland. This Middle Nation was English to the Irish and Irish to the English. His Description of Ireland, printed in Holinshed's "Chronicles," aroused deep resentment among the Gaels. Philip O'Sullivan penned an angry rejoinder, in Latin, denouncing him for aspersing an ancient nation, of whose life and thought he was utterly ignorant. Rich squirts all his venom on Stanihurst. Tradition, often more valuable in Irish History than State Papers, tells that Stanihurst, when he consorted with many of the old Irish on the Continent, in the common stream of misery wherein Gael and Sean Ghall were confounded by the Great Dispersal, following on the subjugation of their country, wrote a recantation. Ware evidently heard the rumour, for he records that Stanihurst wrote some books he had not seen. Tradition is justified in O'Sullivan's case. Though Ware knew it not, the writer is in a position to state that a part, at least, of this Gael's reply has, fortunately, survived in manuscript. Rich had met Stanihurst in Antwerp, where he "professed Alchemy, and undertook the practice of the Philosopher's Stone . . . he departed from thence into Spain, and there (it was said) he turned Physician." Elsewhere he narrates what this "lying learned historiographer" was a translator of

Virgil and a "Massing Priest." He was "a man of great esteem among the Irish, famed for his learning and for his wisdom, they do equal him with the Seven Sages of Graces, and do think him worthy to be reputed for the eight wise man."

Rich traverses Stanihurst, in the main, though he is occasionally in concord:—

"And first, he (Stanihurst) saith (*They are Religious*) I say, it is truth, but I would to God it were according unto knowledge (*They are franke*). Neither will I impugne that, for the Irish are benevolent enough among their friendes and acquaintance. (*They are amorous*) I think he meaneth to women; but if he speaketh in generall, I say and affirme, that the greatest number of the Irish, are utterly ignorant what honest Love doth meane. (*They are yrefull*) the more is the pittie, for it hath cost the price of much Christian blood. (*They are very glorious*), very true; and they are no lesse proud, for the meanest Shackerell, that hath scarce a mantle to wrap himself in, hath as proud a mind as Oneal himself, when he sits upon a green banke under a bush in his greatest maiestie. (*They are excellent horsemen*) yet good for nothing but for the service in Ireland. (*They are delighted with warres*) they are delighted with Rebellions, Commotions, and Insurrections, but they cannot be called wars, that are stirred up by subjects against their Prince. (*They are great Almsgivers*). I never heard any great commendation of their Almsgiving, in any such generallitie, unlesse it were to a Fryer, a Priest, or some other of that anointed Order. (*Passing in Hospitalitie*). I would be loath to barre the Irish of that right; for to give them their due, they are as bountifull of their meate and drinke, as any other Nation in Europe whatsoever," Then follows an amusing and most abusive account of Fasting, Abstinence, and burial services. Rich was sure that many of the Irish Saints were "damned Devils in Hell." He allowed that the "Irish were beholding to Nature, that hath framed them comely personages, of good proportion, very well limbed, and to speak truly the English, Scottish, and Irish are easie to bee discerned from all the Nations of the world besides, as well as by the excellency of their complexions, as by al the rest of their lineaments, from the crown of the head, to the sole of the foot. And although that in the remote places, the vncivill sort so disfigure themselves with their *Glybs*, their *Trowes*, and their mishapen attire, yet they appear to every mans

eye to be men of good proportion, of comely stature, and of able body. Now to speak of their dispositions, whereunto they are addicted and inclined, I say, besides they are rude, uncleanie, and vncivill, so they are very cruell, bloudie minded, apt and ready to commit any kind of mischiefe. I do not impute this so much to their natural inclination, as I do to their education, that are trained up in Treason, in Rebellion, in Theft, in Robbery, in Superstition, in Idolatry, and nuzzled from their cradles in the very puddle of Popery."

The Pope was the instigator of all such hellish practices. "From thence it proceedeth, that the Irish have ever beene, and still are, desirous to shake off the English Government They cannot endure to love the English, because they differ so much in Religion They cannot be induced to love anything that doth come from the English . . . they had still rather retaine themselves in their sluttishnesse, in their vncleanliness, in their rudeness, in their inhumane loathsomenes, then they would take any example from the English, either of *civility*, *humanity*, or any manner of *Decencie*."

He holds forth at length on their inclination to "cruelty, incivility, ingratitude." This peroration may be epitomised in a sentence: They were determined never to become English, whose material and cultural outlook moved them to contempt, to scorn and to ridicule. Even the Anglo-Irish in the towns had no cause to love Elizabeth. At the time Rich was penning these words there was a fierce persecution raging against Catholics because they refused to attend the services of the Established Church. Rich could but see "That unfortunate country of Ireland that hath been so favourably dealt withal, first by the mild and merciful allurements of our late Queen of most happy memory, that was a loving nurse, nay rather a kind mother, that did still carke and care for them with such compassionate love and kindness that she neglected nothing that was either fitting for a Prince to bestow on subjects, or subjects to receive from the Prince. And now again, hath not this love, this care and this clemency been still continued unto them, by the blessed and peaceful government of our gracious King, and what is the conclusion, the people were never more froward, never more obstinate, never more perverse, nor the state of that kingdom never more desperate than it is at this hour . . ."

Stanihurst advocated the destruction of the Irish language and the elimination of all Gaelic manners and customs. Rich's comment is noteworthy :—

“The conquered should surrender themselves to the language of the Conqueror” (M. Stanihurst saith).

“Now, for the Irish to inure themselves to speak English, I think it were happy for England and Ireland both. If never a Papist throughout that whole country, could either speak or so much as understand a word of English : and it is holden for a Maxim in Ireland, that ten English will sooner become Irish, than one Irish will be found to turn English.

“Now, for the imitation of habit and attire that (M. Stanihurst saith) should likewise follow a conquest, I protest I would not wish the Irish so much harm, injoin them to follow our English fashion in apparel, where there is almost never a passage from Chester to Dublin, but one Fool or other cometh over with a new fashion, either for men or women or for both. And although the Irish are proud enough of mind, yet they are not lightly proud in their apparel : and yet the example of our English pride hath done a great deal of harm amongst that people.”

“Those of the Irish that have reduced themselves to civility (were it not for their Religion) are otherwise of very good conversation. As well as in their manners, as in the decency of their apparel, they are very modest and comely, but they are so charmed by their ghostly fathers, that if an Angel should come from Heaven, and speak against Popery he should be condemned amongst them, yea and holden for accursed.”

“The greater part of the citizens of Dublin do now dwell in a malicious conceit against the English. . . . They are malicious to His Majesty's laws and proceeding, so they do hate and detest him, that doth but speak against their Pope, or that will take any exceptions against that Catholic brood of the Pole-shorn order, that they do doth harbour in their houses, and uphold with their purses (without doubt) to their great charge and expenses.”

Here Rich provides us with entertainment :—

“They have a custom, that upon any controversies amongst themselves in the country, the Tenants are enjoined to swear by their landlords hands : the which Oath, if the Landlord do by any means disprove, he imposeth a great fine upon the party,

and he shall be sure to pay it ; they are therefore very circumspect in taking of that Oath.

"They have some respect again to their Oaths, when they are deposed upon a Mass book. And I will trust him better that appeareth to swear by bread and salt than him that offereth to swear by the *Bible*, I mean amongst the greater number, that make no conscience what they swear upon an *Englishbook*. And the simpler sort of them, do hold their Oaths to be so much the more, or so much the less, according to the bigness of the book : for if they swear upon a little *Book*, they think they take but a little Oath."

On the whole he is very complimentary to Irish women, but as he had an utter horror of indulging in praise for long he soon turned from the good to chide the bad :—

"Let me say something for our Females in Ireland, and leaving to speak of worthy Matrons, and of those Women that are honest, good and virtuous (as Ireland God be thanked) is not destitute of many such."

"I will only speak of the riffe-raffe, the most filthy Queanes, that are known to be in the Country (I mean the Huswives that do use selling of drink in Dublin or elsewhere) commonly called Tavern-Keepers, but indeed filthy and beastly Alehousekeepers : I will not meddle with their honesties. I will leave them to be testified by Master Mayor of the Bull-ring."

Harrison, in his renowned account of Elizabethan London, notes the use of chimneys in the better class houses—a novelty most unpopular with the masses. "Horn in windows is now quite laid down in every place, so lattices are also grown into less use, because glass is come to be plentiful." Rich makes the important admission that within his time Dublin "hath been replenished with a thousand chimnies and beautified with many glass windows." As he saw but "she-men" in that virile Age, and recorded none of the many known splendours of the London of his day, it was natural that his eye rested on "no such sumptuous shew in Dublin" as delighted Stanihurst's eyes. He who would depict the east or the west end only of any great city of to-day would produce a very mournful or a gladdening picture. "But (saith *M. Stanihurst*), *It doth exceed in gorgeous buildings, in Martial Chivalrie, in obedience and loyaltie, in largeness of hospitalitie, and in manners and civilitie.*" "First for the gorgeous

buildings in *Dublin*, there be some other Towns in Ireland that do far exceed it. And to speak truly, the buildings of Dublin, are neither outwardly fine, nor inwardly handsome neither do I think that either the Masons, nor yet their Carpenters, are of skill in contriving any better." He would not disavow their martial chivalry, "no doubt they have able men among them, both of mind and body, but I believe there are better soldiers in Ireland than any be in Dublin . . . If they mix a little love with their loyalty that he speaks of, the Pope's *vermin* could not be so well entertained as they be." "To speak the truth of Dublin as it deserveth. First for the town itself, it is convenient enough, pleasantly seated, as well for the serenity of the air as for the pleasing walks that are round about the City."

"The citizens themselves are wonderfully reformed in manners, in civility, in courtesy: themselves and their wives modest and decent in their apparel (I speak of the better sort), and they are tractable enough to anything, religion only excepted. I had almost forgotten to speak of honesty, but it is in Dublin as in all places I have travelled, an easy matter to play the Juggler, to make a show and appearance of honesty, but to keep a due rule and a formable decorum in our actions, thats the very point. The very names of goodness and honesty are many times the names of mere contempt."

"God bless me for speaking against pride, lechery, drunkenness or against idolatry. I will not speak against Dublin, but in many parts of Ireland, it is more dangerous to be reputed an honest man than to be a known knave; greater peril to be a dutiful subject to the King, than to be a professed votary to the Pope."

"God keep me from being an honest man, according to the description I see made of honesty nowadays."

The festival of St. Thomas of Canterbury was one of the great feasts in Mediaeval Ireland. Here is Rich's jibe: "If our Catholics of Dublin, could duly conceive how horrible a sin it is, for a Subject to become a conspirator, a Rebel or a Traitor to his Prince, they would sooner pronounce *Thomas Becket* to be a damned villian in Hell, than every year to celebrate his feast with such solemnity as they are accustomed There is scarcely one week in the year without one Popish holy-day, or other solemnity in Dublin."

"The harbouring and upholding of Traitors must necessarily either put his Maiestie to a charge for his own security, or leave his estate in a desperate condition, evermore subject to the plots and practices of his capital enemies." There would be no need of an English garrison in Dublin "were it not for the contemptuous demeanour of the Popish sort of citizens."

Rich furnishes us with the only view we have of the feelings of a "Foreigner," that is, one who had not the freedom of the town or of the Merchant and Craft Gilds. He leaves us in no doubt, for he emphasises the fact that he was "not a freeman of the City of Dublin." Though he would have us believe that he was unduly cessed because he was an Englishman, the existing records prove that the Gaels, the Anglo-Irish, and all other "foreigners," had to pay unduly of "Scot and Lot." "They draw contributions from Forrainers and Strangers, such as have neither trade nor traffique in the towns, but would likewise inforce it from his Maiesties Pencioners, and other Gentlemen, that are attendant vpon the State, if they have but a house or a chamber within their Liberties . . . They exact it from strangers, they are neither free, nor have any manner of dealing in the City, but to spend their money, which only the Citizens doth gaine by." . . . "Where they would cess a Papist 6d, they will ask the Protestant to pay ten shillings, the which if the party denies to pay (or at least to satisfy themselves to their own content) they will break open a door, contrary to law and equity . . . they will carry away with them any goods whatsoever they be, that they can find." Borough customs and not religion was responsible for the differentiation, as Rich must have known. "Although I be not a Freeman of Dublin, yet was I much beholding to the two late Sheriffs, that because I would not give them ten shillings which they imposed upon me, at their own will and pleasure, (I know not why nor wherefore, unless it were for writing a Book against the Pope—*A Short Survey of Ireland*) but they very kindly drew me out of mine own house and carried me to prison, where they kept me forthcoming one night . . . The very next Sunday I could have met with one of them, in Hangman's Lane, at an Idolatrous Mass."

Rich conceded that "Dublin was replenished with many worthy townsmen of all sorts; and amongst the Aldermen themselves there are some few that are well known to be assuredly

confirmed both to God and to his Majesty, and that doth hate and detest this Jesuisted generation of the Pope's riffe-raffe: but they are overswayed with the multitude, the Papists do far exceed them in number."

Dublin to-day is not much different from what it was when Rich lived here, in the matter of merchandise and prices. "The citizens raise their prices in all things, their Houses, Chambers, and Lodgings, are dearer rented in Dublin than they are in London. . . . It is the nicitie of the English (that are every day innovating and devising new fashions) that helpeth them with their Satins, their Silks, their fine Cloth, both woollen and linen, their new striped stuffs, their lace of Gold, of Silver, of Silk, and a number of other gaudy devices, that the English do buy at unreasonable rates, that would never be vented amongst the Irish themselves. From London they "furnish themselves with all sorts of wares for their shops, for shipping they have none belonging to the town that is worth speaking of, yet they will be called Merchants; and he that hath but a barrel of salt, and a bar or two of iron in his shop, is called a merchant. He that doth sell earthen Pots and Pans, soap, oatmeal, Trenchers and other such trash, is no less than a merchant: there be shopkeepers in Dublin, that all the wares they are able to show, are not worth a poor English pedlars pack, and yet all these be merchants. But now to speak the truth, there are several citizens of Dublin, that are very wealthy and men of good ability, that have their shops well replenished with all sorts of wares, as well Mercery, as Groceries and Drapery, both linen and woollen, and there is neither silkman nor milliner in London that can show better wares (for the quantity) than some of those can do, that be called Merchants of Dublin."

His account of the drinking customs in Dublin has been the subject of old-time propaganda. As we shall see, he was roundly accused of gross lying by the citizens. It would be vain to try to impede the flow of his volubility. "The selling of Ale in Dublin, a Quotidian commodity, that hath vent in every house of the Town every day in the week, every hour in the day, and every minute in the hour: There is no Merchandise so vendible, it is the very marrow of the common wealth in Dublin: the whole profit of the Town stands upon Ale-houses and the selling of Ale, but yet the Citizens a little to dignify the title, as they use to call every Pedler a Merchant, so they use to call every Ale-house

a Tavern, whereof there are such plenty, that there are whole streets of Taverns, and it is a rare thing, to find a house in Dublin without a Tavern, as to find a Tavern without a Strumpet." Rich did not solve the problem—where did the customers come from? "This free Mart of Ale-selling . . . is prohibited to none, but it is lawful for every Woman (be she better or be she worse) either to brew or to sell Ale. The better sort, as the Aldermen's Wives, and the rest that are of better ability, are those that do brew, and look how many householders there are in Dublin, so many Ale-brewers there be in the Town, for every Householders Wife is a Brewer." Many of the Tavern-keepers were "known harlots"—a statement made by many of the satirists of the same class of contemporary London ale-sellers. Rich shows the great gains made by this drink traffic. "They buy malt at half the price that it is sold for in London, and they sell their drink in Dublin at double the rate that they do in London." Strong Beer and Ordinary were brewed—the latter being for the English inhabiting Dublin, "that do keep Servants and Families." It was sold 48 shillings the tun against 24 shillings in London, the latter "is better Beere by oddes." He goes into detail on the wholesale profiteering in drink. "How shameful a thing to be suffered in a well governed City, let wise men judge, for with those that be honest I will not meddle." A quart of the common Ale was vented at 2d. the Wine quart—"Hogges wash, able to dis-temper mens braines, and as it is neither good nor wholesome, so is unfit for any man's drinking."*

The Bakers were extortionate too. "They will sell their Bread at double the price that they buy their Corn . . . The Bakers do make a good shift for themselves, for they neither reform their own bread according to the prices of Corn, nor will they suffer the Country-Bakers upon Market days, to bring in bread that is reformed to a true assize." The Magistrates "winked at" this knavery which hit the "English and the poorer sort of the Irish, for there is not a Citizen in Dublin (that is of any ability worthy to be spoken of) but he hath a Farm in the Country, that yieldeth him Corn, both for Bread and Beer, enough to find his own house;

* Of London he wrote: "The abundance of ale-houses that are at every corner I think you would wonder how they could live by another . . . they are all replenished with drunkards every hour in the day and almost every minute in the night." They were the haunts of strumpets and thieves

but the English that do go to the Bakers and Brewers, are made to pay dearly for it (and so they do for every other thing they buy) and as the Irish do know all this well enough, so they have therefore the less care to redress it . . . for they now dwell in a malicious conceit against the English." The lawyer and the baker are the stock devils of chicanery in History.

The Taverns were open during the hours of Divine Service of the Established Church—a heathenish practice. Rich declares that the Mayor being a godly man, went, attended by his Aldermen, to the Church. When the Aldermen had seen him within the portals they adjourned to the Tavern, like the Pope's rifferaffe they were, and remained drinking until Service was over. In the North of England town in which I dwelt I saw a similar sight. The Mayor of one year being an Episcopalian, was left at the door of the Parish Church by his train, who were Dissenters. They spent the hour in the nearest publichouse. The writer said to an Alderman : " Conscientious objections against the Church, Tom ?" " No, sir ; only an ——L of a thirst."

(CONCLUSION).

An Old Yeats Ballad

By R.H.

His future biographer will find the poetical evolution of Mr. Yeats in its various phases not only of interest but also, perhaps, a little tangled and perplexing. Though his work as a whole will then show a more comprehensive unity than at present, one thinks that the poetry of his youth will stand out more or less distinct from that of his fuller years. Subtler thought, more perfect form, a ripper beauty may be in these latter, but the early lyrics have the spontaneous charm of a young lark's song, all the elusive beauty of an April day. When in his later verses the poet complains :

The fascination of what's difficult
Has dried the sap out of my veins

one feels that his thoughts have turned wistfully to the time when life moved for him through a red flare of dreams. For out of its moods and emotions came with a half unconscious art memorable things like *Innisfree* and *When You Are Old*. And it is such as these, one often thinks, will typify best his individuality and genius when he takes his place with his immortal kinsmen, Blake and Shelley.

Of these days, too, are pieces like *Father Gilligan* and *Moll Magee*—simple ballads woven out of popular legends of the Irish countryside, but so illumined by the light of the poet's imagination as to place them almost on a level with his lyrics. I lately dug out of a mildewed Irish newspaper of thirty-four years ago one of these ballads, written when the poet was still in his twenties. It is not included in his published works. Mr. Yeats, apart from his creative artistry, is so subtle a critic that it seems almost an irrelevance in his case to raise the old question of the artist being always an entirely fit judge of his own work. His extreme fastidiousness, too, which has wrought changes of rhythm and imagery in many of his earlier lyrics, has marred them a little for some of us in whose memories their murmuring cadences have been echoing since boyhood. This discarded ballad recreated, as I read it, the sweet emotions of long ago when the poet's verses first cast their spell on me. Its cadences and imagery at times recall to the mind one of the poet's most exquisite lyrics, *The Host of the Air*. And the verses, full of colour, move with a haunting rhythm from incident to incident towards a dramatic close.

The Ballad of Earl Paul—such is its title—relates in seventeen stanzas a romantic adventure in the life of De Courcey, the Norman-Irish knight, renowned for his valour. The action takes place in the turbulent feudal days shortly after the English came to Ireland. In the reign of King John, De Courcey allied himself with the O'Neills and held Ulidia against the king's soldiers. Eventually captured, he was taken in fetters to the Tower of London. While imprisoned there, a quarrel arose between the English and French kings, and it was decided to refer the issue to single combat. A knight was brought from France, so renowned for bravery that no English knight could be found to face him. De Courcey, the Earl Paul of the ballad, was offered release and the king's pardon if he would accept the challenge. It is at this stage of the story that the ballad opens.

I hope Mr. Yeats may see fit some day to include the piece in his published volumes. I propose to give here only a few extracts which will show, I think, that this vivid little ballad has some of the music and magic characteristic of his work.

In the first stanza we see his jailor offering Earl Paul the king's pardon in the prison of the Tower :

Shield-breaker, break a shield to-day,
And John will pardon thee,
And thou canst dwell in thine own home
On the cliff by the sea.

He goes on to tell him that the chosen French champion has already come across to England, bearing with him the reputation of having in the past overcome twelve noted warriors—and that even the people are calling out that the prisoner only is fit to engage him :

And all down from Northumberland
To the green Isle of Wight
Men cry : "Bring Paul, Shield-breaker,
To throw the Norman knight."

The jailor, having presented the royal offer to the captive, has "flung down clashing on the floor a coat of gilded mail." But Paul refuses this, and asks for his own armour :

Go bring me my own armour
That the red rust makes dim.

Equipped in it, he leaves the prison, and this is the poet's vision of him as he moves half-dazed in the light of the sun once more :

When Paul rode from the town
He blinked and blinked his eyes
Like a grey owl men harry out
Unto the white skies.

Arrived where the king with the nobles and ladies of the court are assembled to see the fight, he is greeted with huzzas. And here is the portrait of his protagonist, full of confidence as he awaits him in gorgeous array :

With shield and armour wrought with gold,
A hurting gleam of light,
Amid a cloud of banners
Stood there the Norman knight,

Singing a love rhyme to himself
And smiling from sweet thought,
For he had overthrown twelve knights
And made their glory nought.

In the encounter between the two champions Paul is victorious :

The dim spear met the bright spear
And pierced the mirthful breast,
For God gives power to the sad
Till all things are at rest.

Pardon is granted by the king, who, full of joy, bids the champion further ask whatever gift he will. And back comes the request :

" I ask that I and al' my race,"
The Earl of Kinsale said,
" May stand before thy race and thee
And keep a covered head."

The ballad ends with Paul, flushed with victory, the equal of the king, returning to Ireland :

Then turned he from the king's court
With a clang of his dim mail,
And came and dwelt in his own house
On the cliff of Kinsale.

Book Reviews

REALITY: A New Correlation of Science and Religion. By B. H. Streeter. (Macmillan, 1926. Pp. 350—xiii. 8s. 6d.).

In an excellent biographical note, Canon Streeter explains how he came to write this book, which outlines a position in which his own mind has found rest "after thirty years of search."

The reputation of Dr. Streeter is sufficient assurance that the book will be lucidly and attractively written. It has been very favourably reviewed, and is in its second edition. It is weakened, however, by the fact that its ten chapters are of the nature of a series of essays circling round a central subject rather than an ordered argument. Each chapter is more or less complete in itself, and is provided with an adequate summary and references. Dr. Streeter claims to present the outline of a new Theory of Knowledge, termed "*Bi-Representationism*."

According to this theory, Science presents a diagrammatic "Representation" of Ultimate Reality, and Religion gives a pictorial "Representation." Each is complimentary, and both are "required for the fullest possible apprehension of Reality." (p. 31).

The subsequent chapters of the book deal with these two ways of knowledge in regard to Freewill, Individuality, and the problem of Evil. The later chapters are concerned with the Freudian psychology as it affects religion.

Now, while it is not possible to do justice to Dr. Streeter's persuasive arguments in a short review, one or two difficulties may be considered, difficulties which for some readers will make it impossible to attain the author's position of mental equilibrium.

In his first chapter Dr. Streeter discusses Materialism, and seeks to show that it is unable to give a complete explanation of the Universe. Most of us believe this, but certainly not for the reasons given by Dr. Streeter.

"By discovering a *mechanism* in the movements of the heavenly bodies, Newton made Materialism a plausible explanation of the Universe—apart from living beings.

Darwin, by his theory of Natural Selection, seemed to have found a mechanism capable of explaining the origin of living beings as well. All questions became reducible to problems of molecular physics." (p. 2).

"There follows by inexorable logic the ineluctable conclusion that thought, feeling, will, can initiate nothing, change nothing, do nothing. Consciousness is only an 'epiphenomenon,' a functionless shadow cast by automatic changes in that material process which is the sole reality." (p. 7).

The usual answer, I expect, to this conclusion is the assertion that thought, feeling, will, have probably been produced during the evolution of the nervous system to modify the course of organic life. Brains may have been developed to keep us occupied between the physiologically important events of sleeping, eating, and exercising. The existence of conditioned reflexes in the higher animals shows that consciousness, however material its origin, is not an empty "epiphenomenon."

The author's criticism of Mechanism, I believe, suffers from an occasional confusion between "Mechanism" as a form of scientific materialism, and "mechanism" meaning "the way in which things are done." [Cf. J. Needham's article in the current number of *The Hibbert Journal*].

Then, continues the author, "every actual machine is a thing made by man for the attainment of some purely human end." This complicates the subject still more by rejecting, for no given reason, the web of the spider and the nest of the swallow, although they only differ in degree from the net of the fisherman or Wendy's house in the tree-top.

The comparison of the results obtained by science to a diagram, and the results offered by religion to a picture, is suggestive, but becomes very vague on analysis. Wherein does the real difference between a diagram and a picture reside?

In Chapter IV. Dr. Streeter isolates the three processes found in scientific knowledge: classification, analysis, and explanation, although on his first chapter he has taken pains to emphasise that science is essentially quantitative and not qualitative.

There are many loose and inaccurate similes. For example:—

"... we are apt to compare life to the flame of a candle. No analogy could be more misleading. Flame is a visible accompaniment of the *dissolution* of the thing that burns; life is that which *prevents the dissolution* of the organism by constantly repairing loss." (p. 120).

This is sentimental chemistry. The flame could just as well be regarded as a product of the synthesis of carbon dioxide, and the life-force as a product of the oxidation of tissue. The candle flame constructs for itself, and keeps in repair, a cup of molten wax. The living organism expends itself in hastening its own dissolution by means of internal secretions.

However, the later chapters more than compensate for the unsatisfying amiabilities of the early pages. Although I should welcome the omission in later editions of such inelegant sentences as: "We seem, then, to be shut up to one of two conclusions" (p. 21), and that apologetic statement in the Preface, in which the author explains that he got his science second-hand at the feet of scientific friends. The "story" on page 33 is altogether unworthy of the book.

W. F.

* * * *

COSMIC EVOLUTION. By E. J. Booden, Professor of Philosophy, Carleton College. (New York: Macmillan. Pp. 484, 15s.).

"Cosmic idealism is an attempt at a synthesis of the various aspects of reality as creatively revealed in human experience." The book is composed of three sections, the first of which deals with "Interaction and Cosmic Evolution," in which the generally accepted facts of organic and inorganic evolution are expressed in terms of interactions.

The second section, "Human Nature and Cosmic Evolution," surveys the whole progress of evolution from a humanistic standpoint. The third section, "Relativity and Cosmic Evolution," takes up the individual standard of reference, rendered necessary by recent researches in physics.

It is difficult to review what is essentially a review of the Universe, and the reader in search of a theory of knowledge or a defence of idealism may well be tempted to say with Mandrake: "This glass is too big. Take it away. I'll drink from the bottle."

Professor Boodin's exposition is a continuation of the results obtained by his philosophical method laid down in his previous books, *Time and Reality*, *Truth and Reality*, *A Realistic Universe*, and the reader unacquainted with these works may find difficulty in accepting the notion of a harmonious universe into which the author enters with ease in his early chapters.

The book is eloquent and stimulating. The author's interests are, naturally, very wide, and are sympathetic to the recent work of American cosmic biologists, such as H. F. Osborn and L. J. Henderson. W. F.

* * * *

DIGGING FOR LOST AFRICAN GODS. By Byron Khun de Prorok. (London: Putnam's. 25s. net.)

This narrative, by Count de Prorok, of archaeological research in Carthage, Tunisia, Algeria, and parts of the Sahara, is written in an easy and entertaining manner, with a flow of personal impressions and anecdotes, making it an attractive book for the general reader. To the student, it has, what is not an advantage, a particularly generous use of "leading" between words and sentences. The author writes with all the enthusiasm of a lover of antiquities, finding himself at work excavating them, in company with men who have spent long years in scientific research. He writes as I can imagine him speaking to an interested group of personal friends, which is not an easy thing to do, and as he set out to tell in a simple style, as he says, *the real thrill of excavation*, it must be set down that he has succeeded in his undertaking.

He is mainly concerned with excavations on the site of Carthage, and these chapters are a revelation of the richness of the district, which includes the city of Utica, an important centre of Phoenician civilisation. There are useful pages devoted to a description of the methods of modern excavators, who are more concerned with the surroundings of finds than with the rarity of the individual finds themselves. Every shovelful of earth is passed through sieves and hand-sorted before it is finally thrown aside. A stray bead may fix for the specimen discovered, its period, be perhaps the only clue.

We read of ancient sea-ports, now well inshore and innocent of the touch of seaweed, and of others, long claimed by the sea, and only to be examined with the help of a diver. Some photographs of exquisite treasures brought up from the sea-bed are given, and the workmanship they reveal is the last word in delicacy and beauty of design. There are chapters dealing with diggings on the sites of pre-historic remains in the Sahara. The author in this part of the work was associated with Mons. Reygasse, the recognised authority on pre-historic man in Northern Africa. M. Reygasse is in the advantageous position of being Administrator of the large district of Tebessa, on the eastern borders of Algeria. Tebessa, we learn, contains most of the known pre-historic sites in that part of Africa, and, in some of them, there are traces of the life of man, believed to be so remote in time as 200,000 years B.C.

Truly we are making progress, slow indeed as compared with the advanced state of science generally, but real progress towards a more rational and acceptable

horizon for the history of mankind. It is good to read of periods of years that fill up and overflow to obliteration the long-accepted chronology which fixed the "Creation" at 4004 B.C. There is infinite humour in that cautious use of the odd 4 years in dealing with an event so remote—and the fabricator was an Irish divine! Geological time and Stellar time-distance are accustoming the ordinary reader to a saner outlook on history and its immense span.

The reader will find much to entertain him in the chapters treating of the two vanished Empires, of which only the name and relics remain, Phoenicia and Rome.

In two localities "curse" inscriptions were discovered, two of them bearing what Count Prorok labels as "an uncomfortable message for excavators." One reads:—

"Whoever overthrows this stone
shall be shattered by Baal."

The other formed part of the Curse of Scipio, with which he sought to blot out the whole place and its people, working retrospectively:—

"Curse this cursed city of Carthage, its armies and its people
. . . whoever occupied the palaces, whoever worked in these
fields, whoever lived upon this soil . . . that they may be
deprived for evermore of light from above . . . and (this is for
our friend) doubly cursed be those who try to resurrect these ruins."

And he describes some happenings which were extremely like the working out of trouble for some of the members of the party.

It might be suggested to the author that the title he has chosen is hardly a comprehensive description of his book. After I had commenced to read it, I had to begin digging on my own account for traces of native deities, and with the exception of traces of Egyptian influence, the gods I met were either Asiatic or Roman—"Digging for Lost Gods in Africa" would perhaps be more appropriate! I would also like to suggest, for future editions, the inclusion of a note in connection with the chapters on Tanit, that this was the popular Carthaginian name for Astarte. A more important omission calls for mention also—there is no Index to the contents of the 300 odd pages, and it is certainly badly needed.

In an interesting chapter on Megalithic remains, Count Prorok remarks that the first clue to the origin of cromlechs and dolmens will be found in Africa, and I agree with him. And I will go further and suggest that when it is found, and the whole subject studied more deeply than it has been, a few more Victorian theories will get the death they have long deserved. We are told by our authorities, that they were undoubtedly tombs erected by primitive man in the Stone Age. The implication is that during some fixed period of universal ignorance for the human race, man who was in the convalescence stage, after emerging from his alleged first state of mindless animal, although he could build nothing else on a corresponding scale of bigness, to live in, could and did build himself a tomb. Truly a quaint picture of houseless man insisting on having a house for the remains of his friends. Because skeletons are to be discovered sometimes beneath

these huge structures, that does not necessarily prove they were built for tombs ; we still keep up the custom of according honour to our great men, by burying their remains beneath the floors of cathedrals. On the same slight basis we have been taught by theorists that, for the same reason, the wonder and riddle, the Great Pyramid, was erected. One or two authorities, writing from an inner knowledge of the Eastern schools of mysticism, have stated that the latter was a temple of Initiation of the highest order.

It is quite within the bounds of probability that our own New Grange District or Brugh na Boinne, in more enlightened days, will give to qualified investigators a clue to the true scope and meaning of the Mystery religion of antiquity, which flourished at one time at Eleusis, Samothrace and other centres. What Carlyle wrote in his book on "Heroes," about the nature of the beings, who became the gods of various ancient races, our own included, is worthy of study in this connection.

The illustrations to Count Prorok's book are a complete joy. Forty-three in number, they are beautifully reproduced photographs, many of them the work of Mr. George R. Swain, and lent by the Near East Research of the University of Michigan. The map inserted at the end of the volume is very thoughtfully folded with a blank, the width of itself, on the inside, so that it may remain in view at the outer edge of the reading matter without the trouble of turning the pages to refer to it. The book will appeal to a wide range of readers.

ARTHUR KELLS.

* * * *

FREE-THOUGHT IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES. By J. A. Hobson. (Allen & Unwin. 10s. net.).

Since the time of Auguste Comte, and more particularly since Herbert Spencer brought social organisation forward as material for scientific investigation, there has been considerable work done in the social studies, economics, politics, eugenics, ethics. But has the progress made been enough to constitute them real sciences, exact sciences ? This question has suggested to Mr. Hobson the need for reconsidering their claims to the dignity of sciences and enquiring into the limits to the intellectual integrity and accurate thinking of those who pursue them. The results of Mr. Hobson's enquiries, and the closely reasoned processes of thought by which he arrives at his conclusions, are embodied in this scholarly book in a manner all too rare in works of its kind.

Many and diverse factors—and unavoidable bias not the least of them, because of very necessity the material is human and personal—contribute to make it very difficult for any social science to reach, or even approach, the measure of accuracy, consistency and objective truth rightly claimed for the more advanced and fully recognised sciences. Certainly in no social science have any general laws or principles yet been brought to light. Mr. Hobson's purpose, therefore, is twofold : "To afford some explanation of the slowness of these sciences in producing any considerable body of larger truths," and "to show how the vindication of free-thought, with its accompanying increase of intellectual productivity in these studies, is linked up with definite reforms of social structure needed to liberate these studies from the hampering conditions

which have hitherto cramped and malformed them." Mr. Hobson has a deserved reputation for independence of thought, and his mental equipment for his job has been revealed in much and important work of decided value in sociology. I doubt if he has shown to better advantage than in carrying out the task he sets himself in the work under review. He succeeds; and when the reader has followed out Mr. Hobson's argument to the end, he too is forced to the conclusion that "the very foundations of social science are laid in a pre-existing deposit of social interests, themselves infused with certain ideas of social betterment. In other words, social art precedes social science and is in its turn nourished and informed by that science."

There is nothing of the dry-as-dust complaint to be made against this book. It is clear, comprehensive, erudite, and it has the saving graces of style and wit. An important contribution to scientific and social criticism, it should help to put in their proper place both those of much and those of little learning (and of singularly little observation) who have exalted certain social studies more than they deserve.

C. O'S.

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A DISCOURSE UPON USURY. By Dr. Thomas Wilson. With a historical Introduction by R. H. Tawney. (G. Bell. 15s. net.)

A Discourse Upon Usurye By waye of Dialogue and oracions . . . deserved reprinting solely from its historical association and the glimpses it affords into some economic phases of Elizabethan England. There is nothing that is either original or profound in the arguments advanced, for or against the "damnable sin of usury" by the "Preacher or enemy to usurie," "the wrong Merchant or evil occupier," "the Advocate or Civilian," "the Lawyer, or rather petischoler in lawe." Sixteenth century literature in English affords many examples of the hatred incurred by usurers. But Wilson, richly freighted with learning, is almost unique as a denunciator of the doctrine, warmly advocated by Calvin and his school: "it grew to a proverb that usury was the brat of heresy," for he was an Ambassador, Secretary of State, Member of Parliament, a lay Dean, among other functions. As the translator of the first edition of Demosthenes into English, the author of the *Arte of Rhetorique* and *The Rule of Reason* he is, perhaps, better known. But the publishers are to be congratulated heartily for the reprint in their Classics of Social and Political Science, because they have afforded R. H. Tawney an opportunity to display his fine scholarship. That name on any historical work treating of English finance or economics is a lure that cannot be ignored. His deep humanity, genial humour, his tenderness for the under-dog, and his profound learning have given all his studies, especially those on the Sixteenth Century, an abiding place in contemporary English literature. The Introduction to Wilson's tract is a mine of erudition. From the pawn-shop to State borrowing, every possible avenue of finance and economics has been not merely explored, but flooded with new light. Even the expert will find a wealth of data to be found nowhere else on the Money Market of Elizabeth's reign. It is a work of permanent value to the novice as well as to the pundit.

SEAN GHALL.

THE EMPIRE IN ECLIPSE. By Richard Jebb. (Chapman & Hall. 15s. net.)

"Eclipse," says our author, "is a temporary obscurity, interrupting an effulgence which will presently return. The British Empire seems to be passing through this phase." Accordingly he wrote this book and flung it at the recent Imperial Conference. Without taking too seriously Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald's idea of the beneficence of that Conference, I should say that Mr. Jebb missed his aim. The Conference showed the Empire, not in eclipse, but in another stage of disintegration. And even a British expeditionary force in China will not get over that fact.

An Irish reader needs no excuse for testing a work on British imperial problems by its references to Ireland—and other bright spots. I select two: "The older nationalism, which makes the tribe the basis of the state . . . has disrupted the United Kingdom, through the faint-hearted surrender of the higher civilisation to the lower." "Whereas Newfoundland was Britannic by instinct, the [Irish] Free State was not, being the creation of Irish tribalism." Mr. Jebb quotes with approval John Lawrence, "the great Governor of the Punjab and great Viceroy" of India, as writing, "We are here by our own moral superiority, by the force of circumstance and the will of Providence. These alone constitute our charter of government, and in doing the best we can for the people we are bound by our conscience and not theirs." Ironically enough, he takes that quotation from *India as I Knew It*, by Sir Michael O'Dwyer!

It could have been neither force of circumstances nor the will of Providence, but the perversity inherent in the tribal nationalism of an Ulsterman that made me thoroughly enjoy Mr. Jebb's *Empire in Eclipse*. C. O'S.

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DOCUMENTS OF MEDIEVAL ENGLAND. By R. Trevor Davies. (Methuen, 10s. 6d. net.)

This is a worthy companion to *A Sketch of the History of Civilisation in Mediaeval England*, which we justly lauded in these pages. For Higher Form, Civil Service and University students and "coaches" it will prove a real help. The excerpts exhibit the hand of the expert. The Domesday Book, Magna Charta, the Struggle between the Barons and the Monarchy, The Church, Trade Guilds and Universities, Crusades, Hundred Years War, Black Death, Decline of Mediaeval Civilisation, and the End of the Middle Ages: these are the subjects illuminated. The Latin and French texts are well translated and the English adequately glossed. There is a full index and two maps. It is a sound work, published at a reasonable price. S. G.

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A BOOK FOR BOOKMEN. By John Drinkwater. (Dulau & Co., Ltd.).

A Book for Bookmen is a literary miscellany containing some letters of Matthew Arnold, George Crabbe and others; some marginal notes, including those which Coleridge wrote on Warton's *Milton*, which are now published for the first time; a few essays "on purely bookish matters," and a few "on authors who may look for attention rather from the curious than the general reader."

The book opens with an attractive essay on William Cory, the gentle school-master-poet, whose reputation as a lyrist depends on a few poems, one or two

of which have found a place in the *Oxford Book of English Verse*. Another essay is devoted to John Collop, a long-neglected poet of the seventeenth century, who wrote some lovely lyrics. Mr. Drinkwater quotes liberally from Collop's poems, and claims for the finest of them a place beside the best poetry of the time. Mr. Drinkwater also writes of R. S. Hawker, author of "And shall Trelawney die?" and otherwise interesting rather as a "character" than as a poet; and of Erasmus Darwin, the grandfather of the famous scientist, who wrote a monumental poem containing an immense amount of botanical learning!

The essay on "Patrick Branwell Brontë and his Horace" is an interesting study of a tragic figure. Highly gifted, flattered, diseased, and with a fatal weakness of character, Branwell shared with Emily "the sense of loneliness, the ache for some indefinable thing called freedom, that mark the poet from infancy." But lacking Emily's undaunted faith and courage, he became a disaster to his sisters and to himself, feeling all the while, with intense bitterness, that it was no common stuff which was thus going to waste.

Of the essays on purely bookish matters, there is one for book collectors on Mr. Wise's "Ashley Library Catalogue," another on the library of Sir Edmund Gosse, and a third on George D. Smith, the famous New York bookseller who "had no care for literature, but was concerned only with books."

It is perhaps unnecessary to say that *A Book for Bookmen* is attractively written. It has, however, the unavoidable scrappiness of such a miscellany, which makes the author suggest that it should be read "at the half-hour before the light is switched off or blown out at night."

E. G. K.

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ANGLO-IRISH LITERATURE. By Hugh Law. (Talbot Press. 6s.).

In a preface which is more discursive and critical than any of the chapters of his book, Mr. Law sets out the aim and scope of his work. He presents it as "a short but serviceable guide-book to Anglo-Irish literature, remembering," as he says, "my own youth and how easy it then was, or may still be, to grow up ignorant of the lives and writings of famous men."

He has not tried to establish any aesthetic principle or philosophy as a basis for criticism, or, like other writers, for the purpose of excluding certain authors whose work does not show accepted "characteristics," but he treats of Molyneux and Swift, Sheridan and Burke side by side with Callinan, Mangan and other poets of the Gael. He seems rather to question the existence of a characteristic Gaelic note in Anglo-Irish literature, at the same time deploring the disadvantage he feels himself placed at, for, "lacking the old tongue, we can, perhaps, neither wholly understand nor be understood by, our more fortunate fellow-countrymen."

Mr. Law's treatment of the subject within the limitations he sets for himself must necessarily be brief and cursory. He covers, nevertheless, a wide range. Beginning with the "origins of Anglo-Irish literature," he treats of Stanihurst and Molyneux, and from Swift leads us to the "exiles," Goldsmith, Sheridan, Burke, "who, though born in Ireland, lived and wrote chiefly in England." Following with a chapter on orators, he discusses Flood, Grattan, O'Connell, Thomas Francis Meagher, the Redmonds and Pearse, on the grounds that "an older and better tradition held writer and orator to be natural servants of literature."

The most important poets, novelists and historians of the nineteenth century are briefly considered ; the history of the rise and development of the drama and the Abbey Theatre brings us to a breathless final chapter devoted to the literature of the last twenty-five years.

No attempt is made at a definition of the subject ; there are " no pretensions to originality or learning " ; he allows his authors " to speak for themselves." We have here an outline history of the subject, treating of writers not included in Ernest F. Boyd's *Ireland's Literary Renaissance*. As a guide-book it would be all the more serviceable had Mr. Law included a short bibliography. It is, indeed, an introduction to the lives and writings of famous men ; an interesting and welcome contribution to a subject not yet fully explored.

E. MAC C.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHIES : REVERIES OVER CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH AND THE TREMBLING OF THE VEIL. By W. B. Yeats. (London : Macmillan & Co. 10s. 6d. net.)

" I have walked on Sinbad's yellow shore, and never shall another's hit my fancy."

This is a sentence from Mr. Yeats' *Reveries over Childhood and Youth*, but it is magical with the gleam of his genius. It explains so many things that really can't be put into any other sort of words. This is indeed the quintessence of Yeats. He has never succeeded in more succinctly expressing himself. For, simple as the sentence is outwardly, it is illimitable in its inward vista and range. Sinbad, half fantasy, half imagination, half man, half demigod—he is indeed the symbol that flutters at Mr. Yeats' masthead. There is a chasm of intoxication in the very sound of this sentence, and yet its sense immediately steadies and sobers the reeling mind. And though it has its personal application, its implication carries us much further, for in it Mr. Yeats has embodied not only his own mirage, but the mirage of every artist who ever existed. They have all walked on fabulous shores, and their life's labour has been but how to capture and express the mystery of this experience—a fruitless and yet an endless toil. For the finest lyric is but a torn and flying remnant of a reality too great to be confined in words. When we grasp its perfection as a work of art we lose the sense of the life from which it arose. The poet's business is to combine these qualities which for ever defy his efforts at combination. The superficial poet is pleased with himself because he has not seen the magnitude of his task, and how his seeming success rests upon the belittling of greatness. The true poet is always dissatisfied because he knows he can never entirely become the vehicle of the adequate expression which continually thrills and tortures him.

Mr. Yeats, as indicated in the sentence I have quoted, has had that experience which is alike the despair and triumph of the artist. The ordinary man can rest in possession of the vision. Upon the true artist is imposed the intolerable burden of communicating the incommunicable. Mr. Yeats' offering to us is a great one. He has had many thoughts for Ireland, endured many activities for her sake, as this book records, and in his writing has given us the greatest gift of all, whispers, echoes, prayers and tears of the one outstanding theme of his dream, " Sinbad's yellow shore."

T. G. K.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF HANDWRITING. By Robert Sandek. (London : Allen & Unwin. 12s. 6d.).

The first important work on the subject in English. European experts have claimed for the study of handwriting a place amongst the true sciences. No longer is graphology to be herded with palmistry, fortune-telling by cards, and all the rest of the fundamentally unprincipled crew. Mr. Sandek endeavours to strip the subject of all the charlatan rags that have clothed its infancy, and to set it forth, soberly dressed in whatever of essential truth its serious students have so far won for it.

The book gives us the history and physiology of handwriting. It shows us graphology as the handmaiden of psychology and everything written, as a decipherable inscription of the subconscious. The book contains specimens of the handwriting of many well-known authors and statesmen. Particularly interesting is the research into the collective effect of national individuality upon handwriting. So far has the subject receded from mere charlatanry and intellectual faddism, that its students have not hesitated to refer to its laws as supplying us with "the material to estimate the real character, the degree of make-believe, to examine the naked soul divested of all artificial draping donned for intercourse with fellow-men."

C. M.

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DOSTOEVSKY : PORTRAYED BY HIS WIFE. Translated from the Russian, and edited by S. S. Koteliansky. (London : George Routledge. 10s. 6d.).

This dignified translation confers on all of us who know no Russian something in the nature of the freedom to enter into an acknowledged literary right hitherto debarred to us. Mme. Dostoevsky's diaries and reminiscences are, as it were, a European relic, and as such their accessibility is important. We are fortunate in having them opened to us by a translation from so notable a pen. The book has the commemorative allure of such works. It is a clear if not particularly powerful or diffused illumination, piercing through the mythological mists that so swiftly begin to gather round the dead figure of a Titan. The probabilities are that anyone who is fated to have a woman for Boswell will be depicted with the wealth of affection and the clear edges of particularity. These memoirs display the realism of a practical mind and the reverential spirit of a character of undoubted depth. In spite of her own unchanging attitude of serious loyalty, she is incapable of making us other than spectators, however intimately she touches on the drama of her married life. Thus we are spared much of the eaves-dropper's discomfort that such posthumous revelations are apt to inflict, and tragedy is kept at a safe distance.

M. S.

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TRANSLATIONS AND TOMFOOLERIES. By Bernard Shaw. (London : Constable & Co. 6s. net.)

There is nothing much in the way of a Preface in this volume of plays by Bernard Shaw. This may be a relief to some readers, a disappointment to others. There is a Translator's note to "Jitta's Atonement" and a few sentences headed "Preface" before "The Admirable Bashville." I wonder has Mr. Shaw realized the futility of a Preface or merely funkcd it? Or has the well dried up and the

glory departed, and should this volume be called Ichabod? In any case no self-respecting reviewer would seriously write about a book to which the author gives the title of *Tomfooleries*, and rubs it in by writing: "The following playlets are tomfooleries pure and simple, except the tragedietta, which is only a trifle." But what a rousing Preface the old—I mean young—Bernard Shaw could have written on the subject of tomfooleries! The dramatic tomfooleries given here are all delightful and entertaining reading. "Passion, Poison and Petrification" is really a marvel of easy buffoonery, and "The Music-Cure," which the author calls "a piece of utter nonsense," is based on an idea which might be used very helpfully occasionally to stir drama out of the conventional bog into which it so constantly tends to fall. Mr. Shaw tells us that this playlet "is what is called a variety turn for two musicians. It is written for two pianists, but can be adapted to any instruments in which the performers happen to be proficient." A wide field of interesting experiment and possibilities for developments opens here. I think on the whole I like best in this collection the amateurish simplicity and vigour of Mr. Shaw's blank verse in "The Admirable Bashville." The outlines of this play show out amazingly clear and distinct in the metre of "the apple-woman's jog-trot to market," and it convinces me that what our modern plays really want is verse—that is, verse of this sort, unpretentious, illiterate, but crammed full of import and meaning. No one could mistake "The Admirable Bashville" for anything else but a play, and it reeks so much of the play-house atmosphere that it should even please Mr. Gordon Craig in this respect. Verse seems to stimulate Mr. Shaw's constructive abilities, and I am inclined to think this result must be due to its inherent qualities, thus proving it the natural vehicle for the playwright, for whom construction is so vital a matter. It is a nice speculation to imagine what would have happened if Mr. Shaw had written his plays in verse from the beginning. I would suggest the subject to the Editor as a literary competition for his readers in the next number.

T. K.

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ESTRANGEMENT. Being some Fifty Thoughts from a Diary kept by William Butler Yeats in the year Nineteen Hundred and Nine. (Dublin: The Cuala Press.)

It is intensely interesting to read these communications of Mr. Yeats with his own mind. Sometimes it is difficult to follow the half-formed thought jotted down apparently just as it arose. At other times the lucidity of expression is complete, as though it had gained a spontaneity by the very reason of being a private ejaculation. For instance:—

Supreme art is a traditional statement of certain heroic and religious truths, passed on from age to age, modified by individual genius, but never abandoned.

Or,

For without culture or holiness, which are always the gift of a very few, a man may renounce wealth or any other external thing, but he cannot renounce hatred, envy, jealousy, revenge. Culture is the sanctity of the intellect.

There is not only intense clarity of utterance in these sentences, but a breadth and depth of vision that is remarkable. Other passages give us fascinating side-lights into Mr. Yeats' personality. Here is one which shows how he can be

deceived about himself, and find relief from the irritation caused through cynicism and despair in a stern determination to face his destiny :—

I thought myself loving neither vice nor virtue; but virtue has come upon me and given me a nation instead of a home. Has it left me any lyrical faculty? Whatever happens I must go on that there must be a man behind the lines already written; I cast the die long ago and must be true to the cast.

And to those acquainted with his work, so full of imagination and idealism, it is interesting to find him writing :—

It is my business to keep close to the impressions of sense, to common daily life. and

I must do all these things that I may set myself into a life of action and express not the traditional poet but that forgotten thing, the normal active man.

Again, see him driving himself to work and dawdling by the way, like any shop assistant on a Monday morning :—

“Two hours’ idleness—because I have no excuse but to begin creative work, an intolerable toil.”

Truly human nature is much the same in poet or pot-boy.

* * * *

THE NOEL DOUGLAS REPRINTS.

SHAKESPEARE : The Sonnets, 1609. 5s.

JOHN DONNE : The First and Second Anniversaries, 1621. 6s.

MILTON : Poems, 1645. 6s.

WILLIAM BLAKE : Poetical Sketches, 1783. 4s. 6d.

WILLIAM COLLINS : Odes, 1747. 4s.

WORDSWORTH AND COLERIDGE : Lyrical Ballads, 1798. 9s.

By the publication of these exquisite replicas Mr. Douglas has not only achieved a distinctive place for himself at a time which has made itself notable for the production of such books, but he has also placed under a debt of gratitude the scholar, the bibliographer, and above all, perhaps, the poor collector, of the future as well as the present day. The scholar has here in a well nigh perfect form the actual text of these classics in their original editions. The bibliographer has those important variations which are only to be met with in special copies (as, for instance, in the “Lyrical Ballads,” for the example of which Mr. Douglas has selected one of the three existing copies with the Bristol imprint, containing the “Lewti” of Coleridge, which is not to be found in later issues), and, best of all, the poor haunter of quay-side and book store may, if he is a wise man, at last procure at a price which is surely within the range of the most cobwebbed purse those treasures which have hitherto hung vision-like beyond the ultima thule of his dreams.

In a later issue I hope to return to a full description of these books. For the moment I must content myself by advising all those who have not already done so to procure, while it is still possible, a set of these beautifully-printed volumes, which are in every sense an adornment to the most elite of libraries and a reliable source of reference to any of the authors contained in the series.

RUSTIC ELEGIES. By Edith Sitwell. (London : Duckworth. 5s. net.).

Thank God that we carry within us something that can counteract the poets' expressed conceptions ; something to which the poets' expressed conceptions must creep and crawl, some touchstone, some standard by which we can measure them. Otherwise the poets could work their will with us. They could harrow us, mangle and maul our feelings, fling us down and trample on us.

Miss Sitwell can be very superficial and artificial. And yet I think that much of this jingling, jangling, brocade, frou-frou stuff, is but an attempted escape from something that is torturing her, an escape that does not succeed. For she has other moods in which she strikes deeper, moods of sheer terror and horror in which there is no relief. One subject she always approaches with respect and solemnity—Death, for she has not yet seen Life as the deliverer who commands her allegiance. But these gashed phrases—there is blood on them, whipped there by the throng of self-immolation.

She came very near to overpowering me in "The Hambone and the Heart." This poem is a confession of her own divided allegiance. It is the cry of a tortured soul. For the beatific vision is, for her, always marred by the antics of the senseless clown of human life. She cannot even help thinking of the sun more often in his unlovely than in his lovely aspects :—

Ah, that my sun
Loved my heart less than carrion.

And so, in this poem, where she gives us a glimpse of the unutterable simplicity and depth of a mother's love, she must needs end it on the note of the frenzied, passionate rebellion of a heart that finds its vision of good not only unattainable, but defiled, because of its own diabolical wilfulness of belief.

For underneath the lime-trees golden town
Of Heaven, where he stood, the tattered Clown
Holding the screaming Heart and the Hambone,
You saw the Clown's thick hambone, life-pink carrion.
Old pigs, starved dogs, and long worms of the grave
Were rooting at it, nosing at it there.
Then you, my sun, left me and ran to it
Through pigs, dogs, grave-worms' ramparted tall waves.

One passes over the absurd idea of worms rooting or nosing at anything. My case against these lines is that they are not true. Those who can see the "lime-trees golden town of heaven" can never see the awful desecration described in the succeeding lines. And yet, as I said, I nearly succumbed to the frenzied power of this poem, till the guardian angel of my heart delivered me.

If Miss Sitwell could only admit that essential life is always good and beautiful, what wonderful things she could do. For there is the handling in this book of the mastery of perceptions. There is the tang of power, more often bitter than beautiful. But if it were all beauty, how it would stir the world. The section entitled "Proserpine" in "Prelude to a Fairy Tale," which tells the story of a witch, is superb in its wizardry. But she is always running into ephemeral asides. When she thinks of Jupiter shooting, she writes :—

His blunderbuss's ancient repercussions
Fired but pears and apples furred as Russians.

and she is so much in love with the phrase that she repeats it about Mars. This is intolerable both as poetry and fantasy. And again, the association of a kiss with worms. She uses this simile in two poems :—

There where the kiss seems immortality
I prophesy the worm,——

I can but foretell
The worm where once the kiss clung,——

There is here the morbid, gruesome, sentimental debauchery of that second-rate sensitive mind that Tennyson once derided, and such is not worthy of a poet of Miss Sitwell's attainments.

I think Miss Sitwell, when she is content to be natural and herself, is a poet, But she is under the sway of a relentless, carping and capricious intellect that plays sad havoc with her simpler perceptions. And she is never a poet when in her mistaken moments of frenzy she tries hard to be one, deliberately and with selfconsciousness. The verses written altogether out of this make-believe mood are intolerable as poetry. They are spurious, hybrid, inconsequential. When she wants to lecture and preach and pose and scold she should write prose. The poet's domain is confined to a few simple, noble aspects of beauty or truth. But it holds ample room for the incalculable scope and sweep of illimitable divinity.

T. K.

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NEWS OF THE DEVIL. By Humbert Wolfe. (London : Ernest Benn, Ltd.
3s. 6d. net).

The title of Mr. Humbert Wolfe's poem, *News of the Devil*, troubles me, for it seems to me that there is more news about God than the devil in it. In my reading its main theme is summed up in the lines—

Listen ! the stuff that God is woven of
is love of loving for the sake of love,
which has one only purpose and one aim,
to justify the splendour of that name.

The doctrine is unimpeachable, but who can praise the way of putting it ?

There is evidently something in the basal construction of *News of the Devil* that escapes me. It is an easier task to turn to a consideration of its merits as verse. And here it strikes me that Mr. Wolfe has not succeeded in keeping up the impression of poetry right through the poem. I don't object to commonplace sentiments, crude phrases or realism, but when a poet brings these into his work I feel that he should do so in just that sort of way that will touch them off with a tincture at least of the inherent inevitability of verse. The poet's universe swings between the poles of conception and expression. And it is always true that the unsaid things are a poem's greatest asset. And when the poet works truly his building-up, sometimes irrelevant stuff, will shine with its lawful radiance. This is where *News of the Devil* seems to me to fail. There are long passages in it where I can discern nothing of the irradiating sense of poetry. Its wit, its satire, its invective, its caustic comment—all these are evident. But its revelation and inspiration come in but fitful and wayward gusts. There can be nothing lukewarm about poetry. When the miracle of art occurs, everything is flung into the boiling cauldron.

T. K.

THE EEL, AND OTHER POEMS. By Evan Morgan. (London : Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. 5s. net.)

Mr. Evan Morgan has undoubted poetic powers, and he has tried many varieties of expression. He can write lines like this, descriptive of a soul in hell :

" Its eyes grew scaly, purblind as the worm
Slow moving down the channel of its bowels,"

original and striking, but too loathesome almost to be poetry at all ; and he can reach to the delicate ecstasy of

" As a spear of light she shimmers through the twilight minstrelsy,
Quiet treads with subtle poise,
In her sandals of turquoise."

And when he is obsessed by the demon of argument he can give us a long dreary poem like " In Answer." And yet the final impress of his book is of a mind that moves leisurely but truly in a somewhat limited sphere of a poetical perception. At present I think that religion is a greater thing to him than poetry. His imagination works most freely in the lines entitled " Angelus Dei," a poem dealing with the fate of an unrepentant sinner, and describing his descent to hell. There is a morbid feeling running through these lines that is not very pleasant, and I don't think it is an adequate interpretation of either religion or poetry. Though Mr. Morgan believes in hell he has not made it in these lines a reality of poetry.

There is not a trace of the new breath of poetry in this book. Mr. Morgan writes in the gentle serenity of many of the old writers of English verse, whose vision of life was unperturbed by rude facts like miners or bolshevists. In this little secluded parlour he can raise his head with dignity. In other words, the roots of his inspiration is artificial, not born out of life, but from culture and leisure. An authentic inspiration is always true down to the minutest details. And this is why the title poem, " The Eel "—which is very nearly an organic whole, is marred by little inconsistencies.

From the deeps there let me cry and when smothered by the wave,
Entirely hid and smothered by the wave,
Let me cry, and hear my cry, my cry to Thee to save.
When my bones are knocked together by the wave,
Let me rise then as an eel, as an eel up through the sea,
Let me creep unto His feet to lie there patiently,
Until His eyes of mercy are turned with love on me.

The physical imagery of this passage is erring, because there are no waves, as he uses the word in the " deeps." The wave is a surface phenomenon as the beginning line of the poem indicates :—

I have floated far too long on the surface of the wave.

And this slip blurs very considerably the underlying pictorial concept of what is otherwise in many respects a fine piece of work.

T. K.

BRANCHES OF ADAM. By John Gould Fletcher. (London : Faber & Gwyer. 6s. net.)

There is much imagination and fervour in this poem, but it is an imagination that seems to me not to arise out of a real imaginative life. I do not care for the looseness of the form. The lines are difficult to read consistently, some of them having the rhythm of prose, and others falling naturally into the measure of conventional metres. This may have something to do with the lax and unsatisfactory tension of its imaginative concept. But I think it is something more than this. It is an attempt, and a brave attempt, of the author to pierce through to an inner world of reality by inadequate means. He seems to me to rely too much upon phrases which come to him readily, and too little upon the necessity of only writing about things that have been a vital experience to him in some part of his nature. I don't think the world of the true imaginative idea can be reflected in anything that is cumbersome or partakes of the turmoil of the lower senses. Mr. Fletcher aims high, for in his preface he ranks himself with the myth makers. But I think he would have done much better to have written entirely in prose. I feel that some artistic sanctity has been violated in this poem. A poet must have complete control of his material. It is fatal for him to allow any indication that he is being influenced by his medium. The clear branching-out light of a controlling and directing power is not evident in *Branches of Adam*. There is much interesting reason and suggestion in it, and many finely-worded descriptive passages, but there is no intuitive appeal to the reader. There is a sort of wonder, but it is quickly stifled by bewilderment. And I suspect that Mr. Fletcher is really more interested in the making of a sort of philosophical myth than a poem. Indeed, now that I glance at the opening sentence of his Preface again, I see that the clear way in which he sets out "the object of this poem" is unmistakable evidence that the subtle and elusive thing called poetry is not at all his prime aim.

T. K.

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AT DAWN ABOVE AHERLOW. Poems by John Lyle Donaghy. (Dublin : The Cuala Press).

Mr. Donaghy has given us an adventurous, in many ways a surprising, book. He has aimed high, and he has avoided most of the conventional tricks of recognised poets. He has not hesitated to make use of phrases very like the stilted language of the journalist, and he has adopted the "go-as-you-please" style, usually called *vers libre*. And yet it seems to me that he has succeeded in handling his themes in just that slightly different way that makes all the difference between a poet and a writer.

There are no pretty phrases here, no quotable lines, for Mr. Donaghy in this phase of his development disdains such things. But in the underlying spirit of his work I catch faint and stray traces of his hold upon the fashioning and moulding power of the enduring in which beauty and power embrace.

It is indeed the capacity for power that most interests me in Mr. Donaghy's verse. Poetry is too full of the expression of beauty and pathos. Occasionally we get inspiration and illumination. But seldom do we get these qualities allied

with strength. And this is just what the poets of our age require—some iron quality of determination and resolute will allied to the palpitating and vanishing sense of beauty.

Mr. Donaghy moves freely in this sphere ; and it is a good sign in a young poet. He thinks, and he also sees. And he commands his muse to fulfil his behests. And when his utterance gets a little more loose-limbered, I feel sure he will achieve something undeniably distinctive and distinguished, of which *A Dawn above Aherlow* is but the forerunner.

And yet I must not leave this book so cavalierly. For in my mind is ringing the potent spell of his hymn "To Melancholy":—

"The rainbow was a ray from her,
The stars a drifted spume
of her the fashioner,
the shadow under the arch of birth."

That is good. And still I say, it is not so much the accomplishment in this book that interests me as the promise that the author's initial grasp of fundamental verities suggests. Mr. Donaghy is beginning in knowledge and intuition where many a fullfledged poet has ended. T. G. K.

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AN IRISH SINGER IN THE EAST.

ABOVE THE RAINBOW, AND OTHER POEMS. 12 annas (1s).

A TIBETAN BANNER. 6 annas (6d.).

Both by James H. Cousins. (Madras : Ganesh & Co.).

It is pleasant, the keeping in touch with widely-parted friends, and these companion books of song from an Irish poet are a happy link with one who some years ago sang his songs on Irish soil, amongst us. These are written within sight of the most northern Indian station on the road to Tibet. *Above the Rainbow* contains a short poem written by Mr. Cousins during his visit to Ireland in 1925. In the last lines a message is left to remind us of our responsibility as inheritors of so much that is sacred, belonging to the most ancient inhabitants of this country.

"Yet, for the spirit's deeper thirst,
From ancient, wise, enchanted springs
Drink, that thy Last be as thy First—
A glory sought by saints and kings."

There are poems, also, marking the poet's progress through Europe on his journey, full of his olden charm and individuality. Accompanied by a photograph of a Tibetan banner, the other little book sets out the lesson depicted on the ancient standard, and it reminds one of Arnold's *Light of Asia*, both in subject and style. Both books are published at a price that is modest to the furthest degree of reticence.

A. K.

THE SECRET MOUNTAIN. By Kenneth Morris. Decorations by K. Romney Towndrow. (London : Faber & Gwyer. 12s. 6d. net.)

And so the Spirit of Earth rode forth from Heaven with the Lady Daffodil !

and he remembered all the hopes he had in his young time, and the beauty of his youthful dreams. Visions of beautiful victories rose before him. Inspired and strengthened by her stirring companionship, he would purge his house of evil utterly ; then ride out under the banners of Aldebaran and worship God in high deeds along the borders of space.

This altogether delightful book is the work of a Cymric poet and writer who has with it enriched the whole English-speaking world. The tales deserve to be ranked among the best of the wonder tales possessed by humanity. They are wrought with the high magic of words, and reveal Beauty and Wisdom clothed in living Celtic imagery. The lines quoted above hint at the power of imagination which characterises Kenneth Morris's work. To my mind there arises no question of comparison between the various tales before me. Each is a gem in itself, and is cut and polished according to the art of the Poet ; the beauty in the unwrought idea brought out so that it is obvious to the minds of others, not yet fully aware of their folded wings and sleeping inner sight.

The Secret Mountain surely holds a message for some of us ! To me it seems that the message is for all, soon or late ; even if we are too heavy-eyed to understand what the Stranger is saying, there peeps through this story of the slave in ancient Babylon a dim sense of identification in some unknown way with our own inner life. We travel with him on his long search for the Secret Mountain, and in the end are granted a peep into the Council Chambers of Eternity, as the slave lays down his chains. All that is ancient in us is roused up and set wondering.

Daffodil soars up and away, back to the dawn of hope that came to the Spirit of Earth, the Prodigal Son of the Universe. His appearance among the radiant Princes of the empyrean threw all into an attitude of defence ; he brought his dark clouds with him, through which they saw the dark red aura of passion and discontent. How he found an intercessor and companion in the Princess Daffodil, and why she remained on Earth, you will find in this book.

Her presence was a light to heal sorrow, to exorcise or shame away evil . . . an atmosphere breathed about her, quickening, spiritual and delicate, but very robust too, and with power to awaken souls.

Something of the nature of the fair flower we know surely in this last passage.

Then there are such titles as " Red-Peach-Blossom Inlet," " The Rose and the Cup," " The Saint and the Forest-Gods," " The Last Adventure of Don Quixote," " The Divina Commedia of Evan Leyshon " (the last truly a remarkable experience in the reading thereof), and others. The author lives in China, Ancient India, Persia of the Roses, Spain, and elsewhere, and you must be there with him. With Wang Tao-Chen you row over the still lake to Red-Peach-Blossom inlet.

He had left the middle lake far behind, and was in the shadow of lofty hills . . . High up among the pines a little blue-tiled temple glowed in the magical air. Above the bluff yonder, over whose steep sheer face little pine-trees hung jutting half-way between earth and heaven, delicate feathers of cloud, bright as polished silver, floated in a sky bluer than glazed porcelain. . . . Wang Tso-Chen . . . felt a quickening of the life within him : the rising of a calm, sacred quality of life . . .

And so the witchery of language flows on, a curtain falls for a moment, and we are carried to see Don Quixote go forth on his last adventure. He remembers that he had made a will, the Curate had taken his confession, Sancho had besought him, with much blubbering, not to be so injudicious as to die, whatever that might mean. He must have fallen asleep just then for a little, to wake thus a new man. In his indestructible chivalry he finds himself riding with a radiant companion, who delivers him in a fight against amazing odds.

"Señor," said Don Quixote, "to whom am I honoured to owe my deliverance?" "Caballero," said the other, "let your grace make nothing of the deliverance. I am, in truth, the Captain-General of the war-hosts of my Sovereign; and, hence, qualified to appreciate the greatness of your feat. I am styled 'Michael of the Flaming Sword.'" Side by side they rode forward to the palace gates of their Sovereign—Don Quixote of La Mancha and Don Michael Archangel.

Then there is Sion ap Sioncyn, with his Ossian-like stay of three hundred years with the Immortals, and who just fades away, is not, on his return to that little white cottage, and we are left peering into the night shadows from its rosy glowing doorway. In the "Rose and the Cup" we are permitted to gaze for a moment in wonder at the long-lost seven-ringed Cup of Jamshyd, sung by Omar, the tent-maker.

I suspect Kenneth Morris to have spent many a dream-night amid ruined rose-gardens, crumbling pagodas, and ancient mountain kingdoms of faery—and his memory and imagination do not fail him ever. He sings his creations into the heart, as, also, he draws his inspiration from the Heart of the World. You shall always feel the height of the magic, the white clean magic of Mother Nature, that fills the places unspoilt by her eldest child; the beauty you have glanced at he will show in all its height and depth. For the slave in *The Secret Mountain* :—

In the pillared sombreness of the high beeches his imaginings grew in augustness . . . July, dark, blue and proud and beautiful—July with the Egyptian eyes, brooded in the heavens, silence pondered in the palaces of leaves, and no birds sang. August came, light-footed, over the beech-tops, diffusing a fine remote gold through the air.

A special word is due to the imaginative symbols, created by Mr. K. Romney Towndrow as illustrations to the tales. If you are not well acquainted with the power of a symbol, you may learn something by referring to these in turn, after you have read the story they seek to express. The publishers are to be congratulated on their presentation of these stories of Kenneth Morris's in a very delightful and appropriate style. The paper, margins, type and setting are all in the key of their subject and the lightness and dignity combined, with a certain touch of antiquity in the type used for the titles, are worthy of note; while the blank pages of excellent paper about the illustrations are proof that no care has been stinted in making *The Secret Mountain* a treasure-book in every respect.

CIAN DRAOI.

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ADAM IN MOONSHINE. By J. B. Priestley. (London: Heinemann. 7s. 6d. net)

This is advertised as Mr. Priestley's first novel. There is no trace of a beginner in the writing, which is amazingly fluent and easy and achieves a notable

distinction in many parts. It is in the aim of the book that one can discern, if anywhere, the intrepidity of the new novelist, a little lacking in experience in the handling of his matter. For Mr. Priestley, in accordance with his own ideas set out in *Adam in Moonshine*, to give us human beings freaking for a few bubblish days in an atmosphere that he deliberately intends to be not altogether human. And in my reading I feel that the realism just slightly outweighed the fancy. That is as far as the characters are concerned. The atmosphere of the book is delicately and delightfully done, but the material personages don't sufficiently coalesce, don't sufficiently doff their flesh and blood to become real denizens of wonderland. The book is delightful and entertaining reading, and there is a freshness and vigour about it that indicates that Mr. Priestley has plenty of unexpended energy should he wish to try further ventures in the field of what is so vaguely and comprehensively called fiction.

* * *
SHOW BOAT. By Edna Ferber. (Heinemann, 7s. 6d.)

The person of taste about to make a long train journey, and faced with the usual array of society chatter and detective shockers, would be lucky to hit on this story on the station bookstall. It is the perfect train book, and flows along in an entertaining pictorial style, as smoothly as the barge containing the troupe of actors whose adventures it describes. Here are no *crises névroses*, not so much as a complex to keep the traveller from an intermittent nap. Its chief interest lies in the unusual local colour. These towns and villages on the yellow Mississippi, these rural and enthusiastic audiences of the show-boat, have a vivid if remote reality.

The romantic presentment of Chicago in the "eighties" as a city of gentlemen gamblers and dazzling demi-mondaines has that refreshing glamour in which American writers seem to excel when reconstructing their country's past.

Miss Ferber has the most exhaustive knowledge of her period and *milieu*, and a broad comprehension of life in the mass. Her worst tendency is the creation of "characters" in the Dickensian manner, rather than personalities. Magnolia, Andy and Gaylord Ravenal are superficial. They would emerge just as clearly from a better-class film. The province of the novelist is first of all the human soul, and no amount of exotic description, no exciting whirl of events can in themselves constitute a good novel. One can only regret that *Show-Boat*, which is so satisfying both in form and colour, should lack the deeper psychological insight.

M. S. P.

* * *
THE MINISTER'S DAUGHTER. By Hildur Dixelius. Translated from the Swedish by Anna C. Settergren. (London: J. M. Dent & Sons. 7s. 6d.)

The Minister's daughter was married when she was twenty-one to another minister over sixty years of age. A few years afterwards she met a young student, and fell in love with him, and when later she found she was to have a child she knew the student was the father. Just then her husband died suddenly, the student refused to have anything more to do with her, and the young widow was thrown entirely on her own resources. The rest of the book, which runs till her child is about nine, is the history of how she managed to deal with her life during

that time. She was no light-o'-love. She had sinned, and confessing her sin to God she took up the burden of her life as repentance.

The author's plan is to show us this woman in direct communication with God. From the time of her sin she does nothing without waiting till a sense of divine guidance is given to her. And the distinguishing factor of this book is that the author has made this personal religious experience a true record of a human being. Sara Alelia Unaeus lives without any pretentiousness or pose as an intelligent, kind-hearted woman, and none of the characters ever refer to her as an example of orthodox piety. The outward world knew nothing about her inward communications with Deity. All they saw was the woman able to deal unconventionally and successfully with every difficulty that arose.

The book is written in terse style, as though the author wanted to compress everything into the smallest possible space. Some of the most poignant ideas are comprised in a few lines. This restraint sometimes leaves the reader a little cold, but it delivers the book entirely from any vapid touch of sentimentality. There are many touches of a physical realism, unlovely and sordid, and pictures of degradation and poverty, but behind them all, not in justification, but as an enduring and overcoming power, the silent and secret communication of a human soul with spiritual reality.

T. K.

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MR. F. R. HIGGINS'S NEW BOOK.

An announcement of unusual interest in the spring publications is a new book of verse by Mr. F. R. Higgins, whose work, delicate, sensuous and remote, needs no introduction to readers of the DUBLIN MAGAZINE. Mr. Higgins's first book, published about a year ago, at once aroused the liveliest speculations amongst critics, and we are confident that in his new book the development of his art will be found to have attained a maturity rare in so young a poet. The book is to be called *The Dark Breed*, and will be published immediately by the House of MacMillan, at 3s. 6d.

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Reviews of the following books have been unavoidably held over :—

THE LETTERS OF SIR THOMAS BODLEY TO THOMAS JAMES. (Oxford University Press. 21s. net.).

JOHN DONNE AND HIS POETRY. By F. W. PAYNE. (Harrap. 2s. net.).

GO SHE MUST. By David Garnett. (Chatto & Windus. 7s. 6d. net.).

MOONRAKER. By Tennyson Jesse. (Heinemann. 5s. net.).

THE LETTERS OF MRS. THRALE. With an Introduction by R. Brimley Johnson. (The Bodley Head. 6s. net.).

THE LION AND THE FOX. By Wyndham Lewis. (Grant Richards. 16s. net.).

AFTER ALL. By Mary Cair. (Thornton Butterworth. 7s. 6d.).

A HISTORY OF HEBREW CIVILISATION. By A. Bertholet. (Harrap. 12s. 6d. net.).

SHOOT. By Luigi Pirandello. Translated by C. K. Moncrieff. (Chatto & Windus. 7s. 6d. net.).

TWENTY POEMS FROM THE SPANISH OF BECQUER. By Rupert Croft-Cook. (Oxford : Basil Blackwell, 2s. 6d. net.).

THE LONDON WEEKLY. January 1 and January 8. Vol. I., Nos. 1 and 2. (Printed by Loxley Brothers, Ltd.; and Published by Wm. Southern, Fleet Street. Price 6d. net.).

The *London Weekly*, edited by L. Haden Guest, a distinguished "moderate" Labour M.P., shows a healthy tendency to stress the similarities rather than the dissimilarities of the various political parties. It has no use for extremists.

In an interesting article entitled "The Empire is Our Country," which appeared in the first number, Mr. Guest stated what seems to be the principal *raison d'être* of his new paper. Briefly, this is to popularise knowledge of Empire affairs, and in particular of the recent rapid development in political and economic organisation. How many of the general public realise how intensely interesting, practically as well as theoretically, is the contemporary economic history of the Empire? Through the Imperial Economic Committee, the Empire is now taking stock of its immense resources, the development of which is—to quote from an article by the Rt. Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P., in the second number of the *London Weekly*—"just a question of business organisation." This huge business problem is even now being tackled by an Executive body, the Empire Marketing Board. "A Constructive Empire Policy" is outlined in a message from the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs and for the Colonies, published in the *London Weekly*, January 8th.

Other features of the *London Weekly* are Finance (a weekly survey by the Rt. Hon. Wm. Graham, M.P.), Sport, and Current Literature. Under the last heading in the issue of January 8th there is an interesting reference to Mr. Yeats as being with Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Blake, Keats and Shelley, one of the eight (only eight) immortal poets of English literature. Now the game of choosing the ten or the hundred best poets, or the eight immortal poets, is, no doubt, a fascinating one, but its results are never very conclusive, since poetry has no ascertainable exact value, and one poet differeth from another poet in glory. Are there indeed only eight immortal poets in English literature, and has Mr. Yeats, with all his genius, a better claim to immortality than William Wordsworth? One would think that the "Intimations," or any one of his finest Sonnets, would alone be sufficient to ensure that Wordsworth should not be forgotten.

E. G. K.

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THE NEW CRITERION. A Quarterly Review. (London: Faber & Gwyer, Ltd. 5s. net.)

The Criterion certainly succeeds in admirably maintaining itself as the organ of the centre of intellectual and cultural activities in England. It is wedded to a school of critics of literature, very learned and very competent, and some of their pet ideas keep peeping out in the reviews published.

For instance, Mr. T. S. Eliot, in his review of Mr. Read and M. Fernandez in the October number of last year. Here he describes our present-day thinkers as "a generation which is beginning to turn its attention to an athleticism, a training of the soul as severe and ascetic as the training of the body of a runner."

"An athleticism of the soul!" Words *do* convey a definite atmosphere, and the wording of this phrase is abhorrent to me. And how frightfully wrong the idea! If words mean anything, the word "soul" must stand for some

vital connection with the formative principle of the universe. How then can it be "trained," or what is it that trains the soul? The old poet who wrote—

"For soul is form and doth the body make"

had, I think, a truer notion of reality.

Again, in the January number of this year Mr. Herbert Read reviews a book by Mr. Orlo Williams, M.C., called *Some Great English Novels*. He says: "Art is a very difficult discipline and should be a very sacred term," a somewhat similar sentiment to that just quoted from Mr. Eliot. And with the sure touch of one who has arrived at certainty he writes: "In the sphere of the plastic arts there was until quite recently a confusion between art itself and that bastard concept known as 'beauty'."

Between "athleticism of the soul" and the "bastard concept known as 'beauty'," I must admit I am considerably bewildered. But perhaps it is only the inevitable result of the impact of culture upon a provincial mind?

The January *New Criterion* contains many contributions of great merit. M. Jacques Maritain on "Poetry and Religion" is both profound and fascinating. Philosophical ideas are to him live things, and he handles them with a courageous insight that falls little short of creative activity. Mr. Osbert Burdett has a story, "The Three Scholars," with an interesting plot, but a little awkwardly managed; and Mr. Humbert Wolfe is lively and entertaining, with a touch of self-consciousness, in "English Bards and French Reviewers." There is a poem, "Fragment of an Agon," by Mr. T. S. Eliot, which seems strange work for the enunciation of the doctrine of poetry as "pure contemplation" to produce. T. G. K.

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BOOKSELLER'S CATALOGUES.

From Mr. Hugh Greer, the Cathedral Book Store, Belfast, we have received an 85-page Catalogue, containing no less than 2,237 items. It deals with Anglo-Irish literature, genealogy, family history and heraldry, and contains many rare and out-of-the-way items. Mr. Greer's prices, as always, are extremely reasonable, as witness the first Dublin edition of Johnson's *Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland* for 5s.; the rare first edition of that curious "classic," Mrs. Amanda Ros's *Irene Iddesleigh*, 10s. 6d.; and the first edition, Philadelphia-printed, of Marshall's *Life of Washington*, in five volumes, 25s. Altogether a very interesting and comprehensive collection.

In their new Spring Catalogue, the 147th issued by this firm, Messrs. Dulau & Co., Cavendish Square, London, have brought together an exceptionally interesting list of books, ancient and modern. Outstanding rarities are the Baskerville Press *Ariosto*, four volumes in contemporary morocco, priced at £27 10s.; the rare first edition (1647) of Bishop Corbet's *Poems*; and the original issue of the *Rape of the Lock*, 1714, for which £35 is asked. What is the standard of values, by the way, by which Mr. A. A. Milne's *When We Were Very Young*—the first limited edition, 1924—is assessed at practically the same figure as the greatest occasional poem in English literature? It is true that Mr. Milne's book was limited to 100 copies, but surely there are not 100 perfect copies of *The Rape of the Lock* in existence! The bookseller's view—or perhaps it is the collector's—seems to be somehow lacking in perspective. Items of Irish interest are George Moore's *Flowers of Passion*, the rare first edition, but rebound, which seems cheap

at £15; the first issue of Yeats *Poems* (1895), £3 10s.; and Synge's *Poems and Translations* (Cuala Press, 1909), for the same figure. By a slip, Martin Armstrong's *The Puppet Show* is described as this author's first book. Mr. Armstrong's first book of verse, *Exodus*, appeared, if we remember rightly, in 1912.

In Catalogue No. 14, Messrs. Elkin Mathews offer an attractive list of eighteenth century and modern books. The eighteenth century is a period in literary history which this firm appears to specialise in, and the bibliographical notes alone make their catalogue entertaining and informative reading. Outstanding books and prices are:—*Burns' Poems*, the first London edition (1787), £12 12s.; *Gray's Poems*, first edition (1768), £9 9s.; Smollett's *Peregrine Pickle*, the rare first issue of 1751, £28; and the first edition of Boswell's *Tour of Corsica* (1768), £9.

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We have received from Mr. H. W. Edwards, 143 Halton Mansions, Canonbury Road, a catalogue of Modern Books and First Editions which contains many choice things within its 12 pages. A copy of Æ's *Earth Breath*, first edition, is offered at the very modest price of 15s. (the back strip, it is true, is slightly defective, but that defect is, unfortunately, almost as common in that great little book as is the absence of the dedication in the Cowper of 1782, or the portrait in Harvey's *Exercitationes*. Rare items by de la Mare, Hudson (a desirable run of these pamphlets which are so hard to find in good condition, and with the "right" titles), Lawrence, Powys and O'Flaherty (one of whose stories, a signed copy on vellum, will, I think, be a new title to collectors of this writer), are scattered liberally through this interesting catalogue. Messrs. Davis & Orioli, in their Catalogue No. 27, cover a somewhat similar field, but the items include many things of much greater rarity, and the prices are—well—in proportion. Here, for instance, is the original draft of Lawrence's rainbow, which the worshipper of Lawrence may have for £65, and the same writer's *The Lost Girl* (autograph MS.) for a mere £100. The earlier Beardsley items are maintaining their value, as witness the *A Book of 50 Drawings*, £7 7s., *The Early Work*, £15, and *Salome* (1894), £7 10s. Books from the Beaumont, Cuala, Doves, Dun Emer, Eragny, Kelmescott and Vale presses are offered at prices which are not extravagant considering ever the extrinsic value of the books. Nor is *The Land of Heart's Desire*, in the original wrappers, dear at £3 3s. Mr. Francis Edwards, 83A High Street, Marylebone, devotes his 493rd list to Canadian and Arctic Discovery, and its 566 items should prove of value to collectors in those fields. Mr. Dobell, 77 Charing Cross Road, in what he (rightly) describes as "A Catalogue of Interesting and Desirable Books," offers many choice things by modern authors, nicely intermingled with books of an older time. Amongst the moderns we notice that Yeats is represented by no fewer than 21 entries.

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SOME GRAMOPHONE RECORDS.

All lovers of the Gramophone know how important it is to be discriminating in the purchase of new records. Experience proves that as a rule different makers excel in different classes of music. Some achieve their best results in classical music, others in the latest vogue for the dance room. It is seldom wise to go to

the same maker for all varieties. There is, however, one notable exception to this rule in the case of the proprietors of the well-known and famous "His Master's Voice" Records. Listening to a selection from some of their latest additions, one is struck by the high standard attained both in classical work and the most up-to-date thing in popular items. The "Peer Gynt Suite," performed by the Royal Opera Orchestra, conducted by Eugene Goossens, is in four parts, and occupies two records. The fullness of tone is satisfying and the delicacy entrancing. Some choruses from the Elijah combine a delightful balance between band and voices; and the records of Mr. Frederic Lamond's rendering of "The Moonlight Sonata" must be particularly mentioned for the fine effect produced. In the dance music section the judicious buyer will be wise to secure the dreamy "Crying for the Moon" fox-trot, or "I'll fly to Hawaii," which makes a capital reproduction with chorus. "The Alabama Stomp," a Charleston fox-trot, and the ever-popular "Mama's Gone Young" can also be recommended for sound and artistic merit. A very interesting record is the humorous dialogue between John Henry and Blossom, entitled "Blossom's Film Scenario," in two parts. There can be no harm, even when in doubt, or not knowing exactly what is wanted, in stipulating for "His Master's Voice," as the firm has built up a fine reputation upon a lengthy output of records of first-class quality in every respect.